

# COUNTRY LIFE

VOL. XXXI.—No. 783.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6th, 1912.

PRICE SIXPENCE, BY POST, 6½D.  
[REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.]



SPEAIGHT.

THE HON. LILAH WINGFIELD.

157, New Bond Street, W.



THE Journal for all interested in  
Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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## VILLAGE HALLS AND VILLAGE ACTIVITIES.

IN another part of the paper it will be found that this week the contributor who is responsible for our "Lesser Country Houses of To-day" varies his task with an article on village halls. He explains that, far from attempting to deal with such a wide subject in one article, he is content in the first of his series to tell us something about the manner in which a hall can be erected in a poor village. We are not going over the ground which he has covered; but it is worth while directing attention to the extraordinary change in village life indicated by some of the facts cited. There are many people still living, and, indeed, some of them not yet, strictly speaking, old, who can remember a time when the English villager had only one amusement. This was before the introduction of paraffin, when wages were small and fuel so expensive that only one or two of the cottagers could afford to have a fire in the winter nights, while even a candle was a luxury. To the house that was the lucky possessor of light and fire, such of the other inhabitants as did not go to bed were in the habit of resorting, and, sitting round the hearth with pipe in mouth, they passed the long evening relating the gossip of the country-side and recounting the stories handed down by their forefathers. How different is the village life of to-day. Its centre, as far as recreation

and instruction are concerned, is the village hall, which, in many cases, is also the village club and the village museum.

For the young the village hall serves more important purposes. This is the day of the lecture, official and unofficial. In the former category we would place all those instructive discourses which are given under the authority of the county council, the parish council or any kindred body. The character depends to a great extent on the district. In one village it may be that poultry-keeping is the favourite subject; another village may require lectures on gardening, fruit-growing, cider-making and the minor arts that belong to the orchard and market-garden. At the same place, the girls and women may be asked to listen to deliverances on household economy and cookery. But whatever the theme may be, the village hall is needed. When these lectures were started, the national schools were utilised to a considerable extent; but the national school has drawbacks that do not call for enumeration at the present moment; and, at any rate, there are very few of them supplied with an adequate platform. The platform is needed, because almost every lecturer nowadays addresses the eye as much as the ear, and his instrument for doing so is the magic-lantern. A lecture-room without convenience for using a magic-lantern would lose half its usefulness. Thus the stage becomes an important part of the furniture of the village hall. It should also have a curtain, and it would be difficult to recommend anything more suitable than the one we showed last week. On it a village scene was painted, and a large number of the figures were portraits of those who had started the movement for building and erecting the hall. The curtain comes into use mostly when village entertainments are given, and these are assuming varied and interesting forms. In some places the folk-play has been successfully revived, and one can see lads and lassies from the fields acting their parts on the little village stage. In others, the Adult School is a useful and flourishing institution, which educates and enlightens people not only by set instruction, but by debates and exhibitions of one kind and another. A movement of even greater importance is the organisation of Boy Scouts, who make use of the village hall, both for instruction and exercises and diversion. With a little ingenuity, it is possible to have for them a target at which they can shoot with their Morris tubes, and so attain a dexterity that may prove of the utmost advantage when they come to handle a rifle.

One purpose connected with the village hall deserves to be specially recommended, and this is to utilise it as a local museum. The museum should be a general one in the sense that all who possess objects of curiosity should be encouraged to send them; but it should be particular in so far as the exhibits should represent things connected with the neighbourhood. Natural history is one of the departments that suggest themselves most readily. The budding botanists of the hamlet should find themselves very greatly helped when specimens of the plants most common in their neighbourhood are shown and plainly labelled. Those most closely acquainted with country people are fully aware of the great ignorance that prevails among many country children concerning the flowers and roots that they see and handle almost daily. It adds something to their lives to give them an intelligent knowledge of their surroundings. If this is so with vegetation, it is much more the case with the animal-life. The birds and their nests and their eggs, the little furred inhabitants of the woodland, the lane and the hedgerow might all be shown. Then, again, art should not be neglected. Where there is Nature teaching, there are nowadays very good drawings of the objects studied, and it might be made an honour for any scholar to have his work hung in the village gallery. Again, there are about most villages prints, engravings, coloured and uncoloured pictures of one kind and another, showing houses and bits of scenery, which would find a most appropriate place on the walls of the village hall; so, for the matter of that, would pictures of any famous horse, cow, or even pig. What is wanted is that the museum should be a permanent record of the events and personages which have been notable in the village.

## Our Portrait Illustration.

A PORTRAIT of the Hon. Lilah Wingfield is reproduced as our frontispiece this week. The Hon. Lilah Wingfield is the youngest daughter of the seventh Viscount Powerscourt.

\* \* It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.





## COUNTRY NOTES.

**M**R. J. L. GREEN, the active and capable secretary of the Rural Labourers' League, is an in-season and out-of-season advocate of small ownerships instead of small tenancies. He has just issued a very interesting communication to the Press, in which he hints that Lord Carrington resigned the Presidency of the Board of Agriculture because the Departmental Committee to enquire into the position of tenant farmers on the breaking up of estates is likely to report in favour of a scheme for enabling old tenants to become purchasers of their holdings if the estate be sold. He also says that if there has been a large increase in small holdings, it has been made on the most unsound foundations, and there is reason to believe the Government are already feeling fidgety over the measure they fathered in 1907. Mr. J. L. Green does not stand alone in viewing the recent creation of small holdings with a certain amount of doubt and apprehension. The truth is that last summer had the effect of subjecting many of these new occupiers to a severe test, from which they have not emerged scathless.

Our well-informed agricultural contributor, who discusses the agricultural year in another part of the paper, shows that the great drought produced different effects in different parts of the country. Perhaps it might not be wrong to deduce the conclusion that, on the whole, it was favourable to farming; but this fact did not hinder many of the small holders from being badly squeezed. One of them, whose place is in Hampshire, put the case in a nutshell to the present writer. He depends largely on his cows, and the phrase he used was that last year, instead of the cow keeping him, he had to keep the cow. He meant that the yield of milk was greatly diminished and the cost of feeding much enhanced. Undoubtedly, that was a typical case. The same man complained that he was nearly broke, because, as he pointed out, he entered his farm with just enough capital to stock and work it and had no resources to fall back on. Another type of small holder who suffered severely was the market-gardener, particularly the market-gardener who depended on flowers. They were a failure in 1911; so were vegetables in ordinary ground. Those who could afford it, by dint of much watering produced vegetables as plentiful and of as good quality as could be wished; but the grower for market cannot afford at the price he receives to employ much extra labour, and so he suffered badly.

The point we should like Mr. J. L. Green to elucidate is how the small owner is going to obtain the reserve which is necessary to meet a bad year. Our climate is proverbially a variable one, and no farmer can be certain at the beginning of a season of reaping a great profit at the end. His income, taking an average of years, may be satisfactory enough; but if he is assailed by ill-luck before he has had time to save funds to cope with it, he must go to the wall. Now, undoubtedly, when an estate is sold, if the farmers are given the option of purchase, many of them will strain their utmost to take advantage of it. They, in many cases, tax their resources so greatly that they have nothing to fall back on, and hence their position as owners has become more precarious than it was as tenants. How to surmount this difficulty is the problem that needs solution. If a key to it be found, the policy of small ownerships will stand on a new and firmer basis.

In our issue of December 9th, 1911, we published a letter from Mr. Thackeray Turner on the ancient buildings at Guildford which are threatened with destruction. This communication set forth with perfect clearness and precision the points at issue, and these were illustrated by pictures of the threatened old houses and the modern houses on the other side of the street. There were also diagrams showing what the present scheme is, and giving an alternative proposal. The argument for retaining these old houses was absolutely convincing. It has been reinforced by an admirable letter to *The Times* written by the Master of Charterhouse, who points out that in these days "the motor and the bicycle have brought within the range of the people of England almost everything that is worthy to be seen and treasured, and have nationalized our inheritance in a sense which has never been so full before." His argument, put into a sentence, is that an old and beautiful house is a valuable asset for any town. Putting the case on the lowest—the mercenary—side, it is waste to destroy an attractive building that never can be replaced.

In the case of Guildford this appeal ought to come home with peculiar force, because, as the Master of Charterhouse very well says, "of the towns that lie south of London and near it, there is none so well-known and so worth knowing as a storehouse of really beautiful, simple, dignified old English houses as the town of Guildford." The Council do not appear to be unconscious of their responsibility. From an account given in our Correspondence columns it will be seen that at their recent meeting they gave careful consideration to the view set forth by Mr. Thackeray Turner in our pages, and seem disposed to act on it. The practical difficulty is that they have pledged themselves to the Surrey County Council as far as altering the road is concerned. We cannot think that the Surrey County Council will be impervious to reason. There should not be any strong objection to removing the unsightly modern houses on the other side of the road. Doing so, as a matter of fact, would afford an excellent opportunity of putting up new cottages in keeping with the character of the town. Members of the Surrey County Council will probably see this readily enough.

YASMIN.

How splendid in the morning glows the lily: with what grace  
he throws

His supplication to the rose: do roses nod the head, Yasmin?

But when the silver dove descends I find the little flower of friends  
Whose very name that sweetly ends I say when I have said,  
Yasmin.

The morning light is clear and cold: I dare not in that light  
behold

A whiter light, a deeper gold, a glory too far shed, Yasmin.

But when the deep red eye of day is level with the lone highway  
And some to Meccah turn to pray, and I toward thy bed, Yasmin.

Or when the wind beneath the moon is drifting like a soul aswoon,  
And harping planets talk love's tune with milky wings outspread,  
Yasmin.

Give me thy love, O burning bright! For one night or the other  
night

Will come the gardener in white and gathered flowers are dead,  
Yasmin!

JAMES ELROY FLECKER.

Sir Horace Plunkett has good reason to complain of the unsympathetic treatment which he has received from the Irish Nationalists. His work for the good of Ireland is famous. It was entered upon in the most disinterested manner. Sir Horace Plunkett has sought neither place nor fame for himself; not even his opponents could say that he was actuated by any except patriotic motives. Indeed, his politics have been difficult to understand, as he has not attached himself exclusively to the doctrines of either one party in the State or the other. He established co-operation in Ireland and inspired the policy connected with the names of Mr. Balfour and Mr. Wyndham, with no other purpose in view except that of regaining for the Irish peasantry some of the prosperity which they enjoyed in the eighteenth century. If Mr. Dillon in a certain passage spoke for the Nationalists, he showed that they placed their agitation above their country's welfare. His words were: "I know from my own knowledge that it is from top to bottom a machine to burst up and destroy the National party and the National

movement." That was five years ago, and since then Irish Nationalism has to a large extent been directed against the only movement of recent times which has made for Irish prosperity.

A correspondent writes to complain that the beauty of the charming village of Westcott, Surrey, is being destroyed by the erecting of "huge and blatantly ugly" telephone posts across the green. This raises a very wide question. When the first telegraph posts were put up, it was urged by those who value the beauty of landscape that they were spoiling the most charming scenery in England. Nowadays, when the telephone is carried into the most secluded villages, this fell work is being completed. It is difficult to suggest an adequate remedy. The type of post used by the Government is very much the same everywhere, and no one can deny its utter ugliness. Nature can do a great deal to bring a new object into harmony with its surroundings—witness the little stations on the Highland Railway, which have been so toned down by wind and rain and sun that only a pedant would now call them disfigurements—but we are afraid even Nature could not make a telegraph post a joy for ever. The only thing that can be said in its favour is that when the wind blows the wires sing a tune that some of us would not like to lose.

Considerable relief will be felt at the discovery which has been made in Berlin. It gives an explanation of the deaths which have taken place that is less alarming than some of those which were set forth. The police authorities are satisfied that the source of the mysterious epidemic is a distillery in Charlottenburg, where a large quantity of Schnapps was found containing methylated spirits in the proportion of two to one. This mixture appears to have been sent out to a great many retail houses, and its sale may account for the wide distribution of the cases. We hope the explanation will turn out to be correct. The scare at Berlin was due to the apprehension on the part of many scientific experts that the Black Death, which has made its appearance in Asia, may find its way to Europe and prove as great a scourge as it did in the fourteenth century.

In a mild winter it is very notable how many of the birds which have been silent during most of the autumn begin to be cheerfully vocal again just before the turn of the year. The few bars of the robin's song have been always ready to greet the right occasion, but now we hear afresh the hurried notes of the nuthatch as he fusses about, looking at the hole in the tree where he was brought up and where he hopes to do the same essential duty, in his turn, for the stock of his kind. The thrushes will sing on a mild evening. The blackbirds do not whistle yet, but they are hunting each other and scolding. Now and then a hedge-sparrow warbles out its tune, which reminds us that its name is a misnomer and that its real family place is with the warblers, all the rest of which have migrated South long ago. And the jays are even more vociferously profane than they have been for some weeks past—and that is saying much. All these are in reality signs of the new time—antedated echoes, so to call them, of the far-off spring—and as such we may welcome them, though knowing the dreary dead weeks that we have to pass in waiting for it.

St. Stephen's Day is no longer celebrated in any part of Great Britain by that cruel pursuit of the wren which is commemorated in those lines:

The Wren, the Wren, the King of all Birds,  
St. Stephen's Day was killed in the furze,

and many more. The death of this innocent and cheery little creature is no longer consummated, but there is still a survival of the customs associated with its hunting in the bedecked poles that the boys carry round to different houses singing songs the while that celebrate the wren-hunting. The modern motive of the procession is, probably, that a few pence may be reaped, as the carol-singers reap them, at each of the houses so visited. It was by a true though a cruel instinct that our ancestors were led to select this date for the wren-hunting, if they wished for a large bag. There is some migration, apparently, of wrens across the Channel, though they are common with us at all times of the year; but at no other time than about the Feast of Stephen will you find so many of them in the furze bushes. No doubt, besides their oversea move, they indulge in gipsy migrations, as those less extended travels of the birds have been named, and, probably in search of some special food, a great number of them are always in the furze-bushes at this season.

In the London quarters of the various Colonies at the present moment may be seen a number of most attractive exhibitions of apples. The sun appears to have done its work as well in the Colonial as in the home orchards, for it has painted this fruit with a vividness and beauty which it would be very hard to match. In one window belonging to the Canadian Emigration Office there is a particularly fine display, in which the ruddy-cheeked Spitzbergen plays a conspicuous part. Some of the others exhibited are Winter Bananas, Wagener and the ever-welcome Newtown Pippin. Whosoever ventures within the doors of the office will find his nostrils assailed with a delicious aroma of apples that matches well with the exquisite colouring.

A few days ago a visitor came to this office with an interesting tale. He is Scottish by birth, but at an early age had emigrated to Canada and done exceedingly well there, acquired land and made money. Knowing something of his history, we were considerably astonished to learn that he had sold his property in Canada and gone to Brazil. And as he is a prudent and keen-witted North Countryman, we asked, with some curiosity, what he was going to do in Brazil. "Follow the old occupation of farming, what else am I fit for?" was the reply. He then went on to describe the richness of the land, its fertility and feeding capacity, its fitness for cattle-raising and wealth in other respects. The account he gave of the country was good preparation for the cable subsequently received from New York with the information that a powerful syndicate has been formed for the purpose of rearing enormous quantities of cattle in Brazil and sending the beef to this country. This syndicate has acquired nine million acres of grazing land. It is estimated that there are already thirty million head of cattle existing in Brazil; but there is a considerable home demand, and this number is in the way of being much enlarged for the purpose of meeting the European market. Capital for the enterprise has been found mostly in the United States and in Canada.

#### A SEA BURTHEN.

A ship swinging  
As the tide swings, up and down,  
And men's voices singing. . . .  
East away O! West away!  
And a very long way from London Town!

A lantern glowing  
And the stars looking down,  
And the sea-smells blowing. . . .  
East away O! West away!  
And a very long way from London Town!

Lights in wild weather  
From a tavern window old and brown,  
And men singing together. . . .  
East away O! West away!  
And a very long way from London Town!

C. FOX SMITH.

Mr. Bernard Holland, in the unassuming and modest paper which he contributes to this month's *Blackwood*, adds some interesting little anecdotes to his biography. The only contribution of the late Duke of Devonshire to periodical literature was a preface to an article which his secretary wrote and he signed. The following is very characteristic: "On one occasion a 'league,' of which the Duke was honorary president, was being wound up for want of members and funds. A manifesto was drafted stating that the league was brought to an end because it had accomplished its mission. 'I never before put my name to anything quite so disingenuous,' wrote the Duke to a friend, but he signed it as a matter of business." But the value of Mr. Holland's article does not lie in quotable passages, but in the skill with which he has rendered the atmosphere that surrounded the Duke. He dwells particularly on the feeling that he had for the Duke of "not only admiration and affection, but a kind of pity, great as his position was."

Hobbs proved to be the hero of the second Test Match, the result of which was announced in England on Wednesday. In the second innings he made the splendid score of 126 not out, and thus secured the defeat of the Australians by eight wickets. The result was not unexpected, although the play on the previous days had given rise to some apprehension. In the first innings, Australia put together a total of 184, to which England replied with 265. This did not speak of remarkable batting, but seemed to justify the inference that there was something wrong



with the wicket. In their second adventure, the Australians made 299, the tail putting up a much better game than was anticipated. England was left with 219 runs to get, and the result was never in doubt. Hobbs went in first and played in fine form throughout, receiving good support from Rhodes, Gunn and Hearne. This is the first occasion on which Hobbs has scored a century in a Test Match between England and Australia. We hope it will not be the last. His scoring during the summer gave every reason for hoping great things from him. Mr. Foster did well with the ball.

The turn of the year has passed without bringing us a single spell of sufficient frost to check seriously the life of the

green things growing. In the gardens roses may still be plucked, and there are abundant signs not only of these lingerings of the old life, but also of the already springing new life in the well-formed and fresh leaf of the honeysuckle and the green and swelling catkins of the hazel. All this is written of the more Southern Counties, but nowhere, probably, south of the Tweed has the first half of winter been other than extraordinarily mild. We have learnt to mistrust these unseasonable clemencies and to realise that we are likely to pay for them later when the premature growths shall be nipped back by the hard times which must inevitably come on them. That is no reason, however, why we should not be grateful for them while they last and make the most of them.

## THE HAUNT OF THE TAKIN.

THE takin (*Budorcas taxicolor sinensis*) is a strange animal inhabiting a strange country. It has in China been killed by few save native hunters; Mr. Meares, the companion of the unhappy Lieutenant Brooke who a few years ago was murdered in Lolo-land, claims to have been the first white man to shoot a specimen; Captain Malcolm McNeill, D.S.O., has successfully stalked them near Tashien-Lu in Western Szechuen; Dr. J. A. C. Smith, our companion, killed one this year in Shensi—but otherwise no European, so far as I know, has been successful in obtaining them. Reaching Sianfu, the Kentsan-fu of Marco Polo, then, as now, the capital of the province of Shensi, we were compelled to remain pending further travelling arrangements. We made for a little village among the hills, four days' journey to the south in the shadow of the Great White Mountain. The way was pleasant, leading through green rice-fields and over clear-running streams which ran on beds of

gritty sand, and not the horrible red loess. Snipe rose from the marshes, and the wild duck brought a sense of home. There were, too, a kind of ibis, large white birds with red curved beaks, red legs and pink under wings, some with bald and some with tufted heads. Crowds of crows and magpies allowed one to pass within a few feet, and took advantage of every patch of shade, in which they stood and gaped with open mouths. The heat was very trying, and we panted for the hills. On the fourth day we passed,

by the rocky medium of a river-bed, among the foothills. Mist and cloud covered the tops, which looked bad hunting-ground on account of dense bush. The foothills run to three thousand feet and more above the river, their summits, thick with wild flowers and luxuriant grasses, reaching waist-high, being over six thousand feet. The lower slopes are thickly cultivated, blotched, scarred, marred and torn as far as the eye can see. My sympathies are with the toiling peasant, but I abominate his handiwork. These foothills are fine hunting-ground for roe (*Capreolus Bedfordii*) in the winter, but too densely covered with undergrowth in the summer. We toiled about them in a blazing sun for two whole days with no success, though George killed a female for food. Here we stayed for some days, arranging matters with the local hunters. We engaged two—Yong, whose heart, as the Chinese say, was not in the centre, but the best panyang-hunter for miles, and Lou-loo, an inveterate slacker, with a shy smile and magnificent calf development. He won something of my liking, for though

obsessed with an abhorrence of any kind of work, the love of hunting filled his mind to the exclusion of everything else. Yong had been wounded years before by a takin. He had hit the animal and followed, his old native gun still unloaded. According to his own account, as he passed the rock the wounded beast, lying in wait, dashed out upon him and, with a twist of its head, ripped his thigh open. Certainly the scar was there, for I have seen it, and there seems no reason why his story should be false. The takin, in many respects, is closely allied to the ox tribe, which, in a wild state, are notoriously vindictive. Our hunters being secured, we started on August 1st, and on the morning of the 2nd reached our temporary quarters.

The cave faced the south, and was partially sheltered to the east by an overhanging rock. From this direction fortunately came the prevailing wind. Had it been otherwise we should have been damper, if such a thing were possible, even than we were. I do not think I have ever experienced a wetter

or more uncomfortable ten days. We were wet when we rose from our soaking beds, wet when we sought them after a soaking day. We had about twelve hours' hunting in all, and for the remainder of the time sat on damp coffin-boards in a swelter of mist and rain. As an accompaniment to every sound came the steady drip, drip, drip which warned us of the evils of the coming night. As the Chinese sage remarked, "Appreciations come by contrast and experiences are the ladder of

truth." Certainly on the tenth day we were in a position to appreciate even the mud walls and squalor of a Chinese inn. At the least it had a roof, and one had to go outside to get wet!

On August 5th a strong wind sent masses of mist and cloud boiling and swirling about vast chasms and gullies. Hope revived and we set out. Our way wound about groves of rhododendrons and azaleas, mingled with stunted larches and spruce firs. Luscious grasses and beautiful wild flowers grew in profusion in the glades, and once we came on a large bed of delicious wild strawberries, some nearly as large as a small home-grown specimen. We stood a while on a pinnacle of rock overhanging a pass below. Yong, the old hunter, gave a peculiar cry, echoed and tossed back from the surrounding cliffs. He said the game, if they had heard our approach, would stand and listen, but at the cry would at once move off up hill. A thin streak of blue sky beyond a far-distant ridge silhouetted the low roof and grey walls of a temple twelve thousand feet above sea-level, to which, even then, the first



TAKIN (*BUDORCAS TAXICOLOR SINENSIS*).

pilgrims were flocking. As the mist cleared, the low, ridged valley from which we had come loomed grey through its folds, the saddle we had crossed and the wide river-bed leading to the plain beyond. Far, far into the haze stretched range upon range of hills, all save the topmost peaks looking like nothing so much as large topographical maps. Beyond seeing something of the country and some old tracks, our walk was fruitless; but in the evening the clouds rolled off and showed what our resting-place might have been in fine weather. The morning of the 6th dawned clear and bright. By 5.30 a.m. we were walking along a narrow knife-edged ridge to the south-east.

George was the first to spot them, two great yellow beasts moving slowly amid the rock slides, rhododendrons and stunted larches growing on the opposite side of the basin which sloped below us. No animal that I have seen is so difficult to describe, and none of the rare accounts which I have read in print in the least prepared me for their appearance. Much larger in size, they reminded me very strongly of the Rocky Mountain goat, both in their heavy build and apparently clumsy, and lumbering gait. On occasions they can cover the rough ground on which they dwell with greater agility than a rhinoceros. In sunlight they are a conspicuous golden yellow, though the females are considerably lighter and more silvery in tone, like the yellow in the coat of a Polar bear, the muzzle appearing by comparison darker. The bulls have a decidedly reddish tinge about the neck, and are much larger in bulk. The back view of both sexes, owing to the length of hair, the formation of the hind-quarters and comparative concealment of the short, broad tail, is absurdly like that of a Teddy bear. The head is carried low, the point of the muzzle being considerably below the line of the vertebrae. The eye-sockets are prominent, close up to the horn, as in the Rocky Mountain goat, the curve of the nose decidedly Semitic, and the nostrils large and well formed. The

along the backbone is very conspicuous; chocolate on the neck and withers, grey on the back and brown on the haunches. The tail is brown. The legs of an adult, extraordinarily thick and massive, appear short in proportion to the body.

We started to stalk those which George had spied, but on the way found a small herd of eight, consisting of one large bull,



IN CAMP.

two smaller bulls, three cows and two youngsters. They were lying about in the sun directly above an almost perpendicular stone shoot, which descended in a straight line for nearly a thousand feet. They occupied a much better position for a stalk. We accordingly decided to go after them. An hour and a-half later we had reached the summit of the mountain, which, I suppose, was somewhere about eleven thousand five hundred feet above sea-level. The ascent was very similar to the country we had already traversed. In the saddles, open, grassy patches. Leaning on the stunted larches which grew about the edge rested long coffin boards and roof poles, for the country swarmed with woodcutters. Did space permit I might enlarge on a somewhat interesting subject. Conspicuous in Chinese characters was a board imploring a thief who had stolen some of the latter

to make restitution, the vengeance of the god of the mountain having been invoked with the burning of incense, should he fail to do so. Bluebells, gentians, vetches, forget-me-nots, orchises, poppies, edelweiss and many varieties of little rock plants grew, scattered above the rhododendrons and azaleas, meadow-pipits darted about the rocks; a Siberian mink (the Chinese call them "yellow rat wolves") flung himself headlong across our path; a blood pheasant (though I doubt the nomenclature!) called from the valley below, and was answered by the flippant cry of a fir-crow. Ever and anon the unmistakable stench of a fox was borne to our nostrils.

Both the hunters were very excited, Lou-loo laughing and gesticulating, urging us forward, dashing about on his rope sandals in a manner highly aggravating to anyone in heavy

shooting boots. The taken were now some four hundred feet below us, the ground very rocky and extraordinarily steep. We had some spare hemp sandals, and these we put on. They were very small and most uncomfortable, but it would have been impossible to get within shot in our own footgear, so we perforce made a virtue of necessity. As it was, during the



ON THE LOOK-OUT.

colour of the young is a yellowish grey shading to a darker tone mingled with brown on the flanks. The belly is brown, the hair soft and fluffy; the hind legs are dark grey, a lighter brown on the inside of the thigh. The upper part of the fore leg is dark grey, the lower front of the leg brownish yellow. The muzzle is dark, and there is a dark edge to the ear. The ridge of hair





CARRYING THE SPOIL.

descent I dislodged a huge rock, but, fortunately, managed to replace it.

We had drawn for first shot, which George had won, deciding to go for the big bull. The animals had moved down the hill, and taken up their position on a sloping bank of dwarf rhododendrons sprinkled with wild flowers. On hearing his shot I was to fire at one of the smaller bulls, which lay some fifteen yards from his prospective victim. A steep crag of rock, which sloped into

lesser pinnacles, rose just above them. George and Lou-loo went to the left, I and Yong to the right. About twenty yards separated our respective positions, though we could not see each other. In Shensi, at any rate, nearly all one's shots at "panyang," as the natives call them, are taken at close quarters. I was, however, a little surprised on looking over my peak to see a bull and two cows lying within twenty yards of me totally unconscious of danger. The big bull was out of sight, the third tucked away beneath an overhanging rock lower down the slope.

I cautiously thrust my rifle over the rock, took a fine sight at the bull's neck and waited. It seemed an age, but at last George's shot rang out, and before he could get to his feet my bull was dead. I heard a crash from below; the two cows dashed past me, and as they did so I had a second shot. We badly wanted meat, so, somewhat reluctantly, I then fired at one of the youngsters, and incidentally made some very bad shooting.

Yong seized my arm as another animal bolted below me. Thinking it was the cow I had already fired at, which I thought was dead, I had a shot and apparently missed, for the beast carried on. I tried again as he blundered over some rocks, and had the satisfaction of seeing him fall. George appearing below me, I joined him. He had killed his big bull with a shot in the brain. It had pitched straight over the ledge on which it lay, and lodged in the centre of the stone shoot I have before described. Unfortunately, one horn was broken. While he told me this a cow suddenly shot into the air as though propelled through a stage trap-door within a few yards of us. This, I thought, must surely be my cow which had as many lives as a cat! I gasped, the doctor yelled, and George, in only his rope sandals, dashed round the corner in pursuit. Very shortly I heard a shot, George came clambering back and we compared notes. He had the big bull and the cow which he had just shot. The latter had pitched a good fifteen hundred feet over rocks, trees and shoots, and was subsequently discovered by the indefatigable doctor smashed to a pulp. I had one bull and the animal which, as I thought, had been wounded by my second shot, and afterwards, on reviving, been killed. Yong, however, who had been indulging in some mysterious manoeuvres on his own account, came up shortly afterwards and said he had found the cow lying beside George's bull in the shoot. The other beast turned out to be a bull with a slightly better head than my first.

Thus ended a somewhat exciting five minutes, in which we secured specimens of a very rare animal. Thick mist came on again almost immediately and lasted during the whole week. On the 12th I left the cave, as I had work to do in the valley below. George remained until the 15th and, the weather clearing, killed another cow after some terribly hard work in thick bamboos, whither he followed a herd.

The following is a list of measurements, which should be of great interest, as field notes on the Budorcas have not hitherto appeared in print.

Measurements taken in the field of three specimens of the Takin (*Budorcas taxicolor sinensis*), killed August 6th, 1911, in the Tsinling Mountains, Shensi.

Allowance should be made for one or two of these measurements, notably those of the female, as the animals were lying in positions which rendered the correct use of the tape a matter of great difficulty.

	Male. Killed by George Fen- wick Owen. Inches.	Male. Killed by the Author. Inches.	Female. Killed by the Author. Inches.
Length of body (straight line, nose to root of tail) ..	74	71	—
Length of body (following curves) ..	88	82	66½
Height at shoulder, allowing for weight when standing ..	52	51	41
Height at hindquarters ..	48½	47½	—
Tail ..	8½	7	6
Girth of body behind shoulder ..	76	60	56
Girth of neck ..	—	38½	—
Girth of forearm (6in. above knee) ..	20½	15	13½
Girth of knee ..	12½	11	10½
Girth below knee ..	9½	8	7½
Length of fore leg (from elbow, stretched) ..	25½	24½	22½
Length of hind leg (from point of thigh) ..	—	30	24½
Length of hock to hoof ..	17½	16	10½
Back of horns.			
Length of head (centre of horns to dip of nostril) ..	18	15½	—
Length of head to lower edge of upper lip ..	20½	18	—
Breadth across eye-sockets (unskinned) ..	9	8½	—
Hood and whole skin and feet.			
Weight (head and scalp) ..	103	45	—
Skin (without feet) ..	—	24	—
Total weight (allowing for loss of blood, etc., 12lb.) ..	665	435	—

FRANK WALLACE.



TAKIN SKULLS AND HORNS.

## IN THE GARDEN.

PROTECTING ROSES FROM FROST.

ALTHOUGH there is no doubt that, in mild winters such as we have experienced in the Southern Counties during the last few years, more Roses are killed, or irretrievably ruined, by so-called protection than by actual frost, there are at times spells of severe weather during which the most tender of our Rose bushes call for some suitable protection. The Roses that need this care may, for ordinary purposes, be classed under two headings, viz., practically all types which have been newly planted; and the more tender of the established Hybrid Teas, and most of the Teas and Noisettes. The majority of the Hybrid Teas, unless grown in very exposed positions and the cold weather is very severe and prolonged, do not call for any

special protection; but there are a few, such as Hugo Roller, which seem to possess more of the Tea strain than that of the Hybrid Perpetual, that do need a due amount of care.

It is, I find, often necessary, when dealing with the protection of Roses, to emphasise the necessity for suitable protecting material. Time was when gardeners almost invariably relied upon thick coatings of strawy litter or manure, heaping this up well among the branches. So long as this could be kept comparatively dry and from fermenting, it answered very well; but more often than not it formed a cold, wet blanket that did more harm than good, or, in direct contradistinction, fermented and gave off gases which injured the shoots that it was intended to protect. Investigations of a scientific and practical nature during recent years have taught us that it is not so much the freezing which injures plants as the way in which thawing takes place. For example, a Tea Rose bush which has been very badly frozen but thawed very slowly will not, providing all else is favourable, be injured so severely as one that was frozen less but thawed rapidly, say, under the direct influence of the sun's rays. Once this fundamental principle is fully grasped, we can set about the protection of our Roses in an intelligent manner, instead of adapting rule-of-thumb methods without understanding why. Nor must we forget that excessive wetness about the stems and roots will, even though the frost is not very severe, cause considerable damage, especially to the newly-planted bushes, which, owing to the severe check they have received during removal, are incapable of withstanding the rougher elements.

For the protection of bush Roses there is, so far as I am aware, no better material than ordinary burnt earth or coal-ashes, the latter for preference after they have been exposed to the weather for a few weeks, so that any injurious substances present may have been subdued. If either burnt earth or ashes be silted down between the shoots of the bushes, so as to form conical heaps some nine inches to one foot high, those parts of the shoots that are covered will pass through the severest weather we are likely to experience quite unharmed, even though the exposed portions, which would, in any case, be cut away at pruning-time, are killed. Both burnt earth and coal ashes are comparatively dry substances, the value of which in the garden during the winter months is as yet by no means fully realised. Moreover, in the case of Roses,

they can be placed over the bushes as soon as severe frosts threaten, and left there until the end of February or early March, and the beds will always look neat and clean. Failing either burnt earth or ashes, draw up the soil of the beds well around the bushes; it will be better than a sodden mass of straw. Wood ashes, owing to their wet-absorbing qualities, are not suitable for protection.

Standard Roses and those tender varieties usually grown on walls cannot, unfortunately, be protected in this way, and recourse must, of necessity, be had to some other method. For standards the neatest and most effective system I have seen is to tie up the shoots as closely as possible into cone-shaped heads, and then tie old wine-bottle cases round them. Where these are not available, ordinary straw, preferably that of Barley, could be used, tying it in a cone similar to that of an old wine-bottle case. Failing straw, use Bracken, or even branches of Yew or Laurel—anything, in fact, that will provide a modicum of warmth and prevent too rapid thawing. It may be necessary to add here that the heads thus protected must be thoroughly supported, so that wind cannot break them off. Roses on walls can be easily protected by Archangel mats nailed loosely over them, or, at a pinch, Yew or Laurel branches may be utilised. Owing to the fact that the most tender Roses are usually grown against the warmer walls, and that thawing takes place there more rapidly than in the open, Roses in such positions need special care instead of being neglected, as is so often the case.

F. W. H.

## MILD WEATHER AND WINTER SPORTS.

VERY disappointing has it been to us all that Christmas has passed and brought with it none of the weather which we have been taught to consider appropriate to the season. In England the regret is more or less sentimental. Medical science deems that a mild Christmas is healthier than a bad one, and in a snowstorm the death-rate tends to increase. But in Switzerland there are more substantial reasons for disappointment. An Arctic climate there is essential to enjoyment. Winter sports can only



Ward Muir.

WOODLANDS—A NIGHT PHOTOGRAPH.

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be had at their best in snow and sharp frost. Instead of that, the warm wave which has swept over all the rest of Europe has climbed up even those frosty heights, and the consequence is that very unfavourable reports are coming to hand about the different pastimes. They all suffer from a rise of temperature. Skating with softness in the air and in the snow is a very different thing

very seldom sets in at home until after the Christmas holidays. At least, the distinguishing feature of many recent years has been mildness up to Yuletide, and cold, with east wind, for several months after. It is the same, but in a different degree, as regards Switzerland. The hotels begin to fill up a day or two before Christmas, but it is not till February that the height of



Ward Muir.

## WINTER NIGHT IN THE FOREST.

(A Flashlight Photograph)

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from what it is on a keen night when ice and snow are glittering in the cold. Tobogganing and bob-sleighing are possible on the Alps even in such weather as we are having, but they have lost their "kick." Ski-ing is still pursued, but only on the northern crowns of the hills; the snow is too soft below. Nevertheless, it is too soon to give way to feelings of pessimism. Winter

enjoyment is reached. What the disappointment would be if the weather were to fail can be more easily imagined than described. Since John Addington Symonds, followed by Louis Stevenson, set the fashion of spending winter on the Davos Platz, the number of visitors from this country has steadily increased from year to year. The exodus at Christmas beat

all previous records, and during the dull December days that we had, trains and boats were crowded as they scarcely ever are in summer.

Nor is that all. Time was when the "mad Englishman" was practically alone in his search for out-of-the-way amusements; now the cue he gives is taken up most freely on the Continent, and, large as the number of Englishmen in the Alpine district is at the present moment, it is greatly exceeded by the quantities of Germans, Frenchmen, Americans and Italians. A correspondent writing from Grindelwald says that in Adelboden, where two years ago there were not more than three or four visitors not of British nationality, there are now in some hotels about half British and the other half Dutch, Swiss,

boisterous amusements of the Alps are not of a kind to commend themselves strongly to the elderly. Ski-ing, especially, must be learnt young; although we know of at least one case in which a man learnt the art when he was nearer fifty than forty, and is able to derive much enjoyment from it, but he cannot rival the performances of his younger competitors. Dickens made Pickwick go sliding with the boys; but we can scarcely imagine even that genial hero glowing with mirth and health as he descended the hill in a wooden contrivance which goes as fast as an express travels. We are afraid the stout and elderly, however jocund their disposition, must be content to occupy the position of lookers-on at the amusement of their younger friends. But even for them, a crowded

Alpine resort has many attractions in winter. The pictures which we show of Alpine scenery in night time testify in an eloquent manner to the attractions which the country offers to the pedestrian as well as to the athlete. Perhaps the greatest drawback is that the man who is fond of walking, and, therefore, of natural scenery, does not usually care to be among crowds. Solitude, which to some is a punishment, is his delight. Recently, mutterings of discontent have been heard in more than one quarter, because it is said that the Alps are not what they used to be—a place of fascination mostly to those who admired the magnificence of the hills and the sort of feeling that they have left human society and come face to face with Nature in her most gigantic and awful aspect. They contend that during the last ten or fifteen years the Alps have been turned into a mere playground for the rest of Europe, a place invested alike in summer and winter with pleasure-seeking travellers, a land studded with hotels and equipped with all the implements with which the natives of nearly every pleasure resort are able to exact toll from their visitors. Travelling has become so easy, and there are so many more people in the position to take advantage of it, that he who loves Switzerland as it once was must now go further afield for his enjoyment. At present he may obtain in the Canadian Rockies very much the same sort of thing that mountaineers found in Europe five-and-twenty years ago. We do not know where he would get it nearer, and some there are who would be inclined to stray still



Ward Muir.

SNOW-LADEN TREES AT NIGHT.

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Belgian, French and German. In the streets all the tongues of Babel appear to be heard, or, at any rate, German, French, Spanish, Italian and English. What all this means as far as the Continent is concerned, it would not be easy to say with absolute truth. There would appear to be, on the whole, more prosperity and, therefore, more people who feel at liberty to devote the mid-winter weeks to sport. There must be also a more intelligent appreciation of the result to body and soul of outdoor amusements. The net result to the physical well-being of those engaged must be very beneficial indeed. Cold seems to agree well with the constitutions of the young people who form the vast majority of visitors, although it is a menace to those who have passed middle-age. Truth to say, the

further. However, all that is by the way. The majority of those who at the present moment are crowding the Alpine hotels belong to the happy company of youth whose motto is "The more, the merrier." They find their mirth and jollity actually increased by the number of their companions, and we have to remember that the long nights lose all their dreariness when companies can assemble to spend the hours with the social entertainment that they enjoyed at home. It is therefore not at all likely that the popularity of Switzerland as a resort for winter pastimes will in the immediate future show any decline. On the contrary, the sports provide such an agreeable means of escape from the dull weeks of the English winter





## TALES OF COUNTRY LIFE.

## THE ANGELS OF THE SANCTUARY.

BY  
BEATRIX M. DE BURGH.



**M.** LE CURÉ was troubled in his mind. It was quite a new sensation for him to find all the contentment had gone out of his peaceful life. Looking back he realised that the change in him dated from his visit to the distant Cathedral city. Not his first visit by any means, for every few years he went to pay his duty to the Bishop, a very good friend of his. M. le Curé had always admired the city with its rows upon rows of clean, white houses with green shutters and heavy portes-cochères, through which, when open, one caught glimpses of paved courtyards or tiny gardens. He had always admired the shop windows with their array of tempting wares, and the stream of passing carriages and carts, although their noise and swiftness had bewildered and kept him a prisoner at many a place and corner. Above all, he had always admired the beautiful churches with their grand choirs and gorgeous interiors. He had always admired these things intensely, but he had envied them not at all. Quite contentedly he had come back to his straggling village with its cobbly stone road, its thatched roofs, its tiny market-place surrounded by half-a-dozen rough stalls, and to its church—his church—his one joy, his pride, his love, to whose service he had devoted his life. By the church was the little presbytery where old Nanon cared for him and attended to his few simple wants.

A bit of a tyrant, old Nanon, who grumbled exceedingly when M. le Curé informed her he had given his last franc to some unfortunate in bitter want. The good Curé was a man who carried out to the uttermost the behests of the Master who taught it was "more blessed to give than to receive." No one left his door hungry or empty-handed while he had the means to supply their wants, even at the cost of absolute privation to himself.

As a natural consequence the love of his people surrounded him like an atmosphere. They deceived him in little things, they worried him about trifles, they tried to lay all their burdens on his willing shoulders, but they loved him. Not one among them but would have gone cheerfully to death for his sake. They held him up as a model to the inhabitants of the market town with whom they came in contact at sale or fair, and "our Curé" was the boast of every man, woman and child in the parish of Descroix.

He deserved their homage, every bit of it, for his was one of those rare, sweet natures which go through life healing sorrow with a glance of the eye, giving help and consolation as unconsciously and as freely as a flower gives its perfume. He was one of the saints, of whom a few still remain among us, unhonoured and unrecognised, because nowadays if you want recognition you must blazon your virtue on a golden shield and hang it up in the eyes of the world, or blare it forth with a golden trumpet from the hill-tops. You must advertise your aureole in these times, and have it carefully painted in with gaudy colours, or the world will pass you by, unconscious even that you have one!

M. le Curé did not paint his aureole; in fact, it is very doubtful whether he knew he possessed such a thing, and so he remained one of the unknown saints, and consequently unspoiled. He was so delightfully human, too, as maybe we should find all the saints if we only knew them off their pedestals and out of their niches. Merciful to all sinners, because he was humbly convinced he was the greatest sinner of them all. Loving them because he believed so entirely in his Maker's love for himself that he gave his fellow-creatures out of what he received good measure, pressed down and running over—and expected them to do likewise.

He had never once before regretted his return to the village where for months the Bishop's reception of his faithful minister had been a topic of boasting conversation. From his last visit, however, M. le Curé had returned restless and dissatisfied. The Bishop had been approached by a wealthy gentleman who had offered to restore the sanctuary of the Cathedral. This work had been completed during M. le Curé's visit, and he had duly admired, without envying, the regilding and carving that had taken place. It was the sanctuary angels that had robbed him of his peace of mind. On the new altar, on each side of the tabernacle, had been placed an angel of pure gold. Exquisite figures they were with seraphic faces, clasped hands and overshadowing pinions. They had captivated M. le Curé's fancy completely, and when he thought of his bare little altar at home, with its wooden candlesticks and faded painting, the demon entered into him and would not be cast out. On the contrary, it accompanied him home, and amused itself by preying on his mind. Twenty times a day it drove him into his little church, where he would stand gazing wistfully at the tabernacle, and trying to imagine how it would look with those two angels of love watching before it.

"It is such a poor, mean house for you, Lord," he would murmur to himself, quite forgetting that meaner habitation in the Holy Land, which was the Lord's from choice.

The villagers wondered what had come over their Curé, so much change did his brooding work, and little by little the cause of his sadness was wrung from him. But, alas! they were helpless! Golden angels cost money, much money, more money than the entire population of the village possessed between them. So M. le Curé's grief was communicated to his people; the whole village seemed under a cloud, and "our Curé" was only mentioned with a sigh and a shake of the head.

Equal to the gloom was the joy when, almost miraculously, as one might say, the Curé's ardent wish was at last gratified. Some distance away from the village stood a fine château, the owner of which had once been feudal lord of the entire territory. Years had passed since he had visited the place, for, bitten with the modern mania for travelling, he spent all his time in foreign lands and let his château to strangers. This particular summer the tenant was a rich American, who brought with him his only son, a delicate child of eight, and a large staff of servants.

The air of the pine woods had been recommended for the boy, whose health was a constant source of anxiety to his father. Before he had been at the château six weeks the millionaire's darling was lying at the point of death. The great doctors summoned from all parts of Europe had shaken their heads over him, and gone away much saddened by the deep, tense grief of the queer little dry-as-dust father.

Of course M. le Curé had heard the sad news, and he was wondering, as he tied up the ragged flowers in the garden, if it would be permissible for him to call and offer some words of sympathy. He had even forgotten his sanctuary angels for a time, and so deep was his meditation that he did not discover a visitor was standing at his side until a touch on the arm made him start round, to find himself face to face with the American. There was a pathetic huskiness in the little man's voice as he plunged suddenly into the object of his visit.

"Say, you're the priest here, ain't you?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"Do you ever say prayers for sick children? Guess I'm not great on prayers myself, for somehow the words won't come. I'd like a business talk with the Creator, but it's like a foreign tongue to me, and I thought perhaps you'd put it square to Him for me?"

The poor Curé had never heard such bad French before, but he managed to gather that the stranger wanted his child prayed for. The kindly, wrinkled old face smiled back at the father with a sympathy so plainly expressed that the American put out his hand and answered just as if the Curé had spoken.

"Just so. . . . Thank ye."

"Certainly, I will pray for the little one, monsieur. I doubt not the Madonna will help us for the sake of her own Son who was once a little child."

"Aye. . . . So He was—so He was. . . . I'd just like to put it to Him clear that the child is just all the world to me, and the dollars don't count beside him. If He'll leave me Frankie, and just send along my way any poor lads as He's got a particular fancy to have helped, there ain't anything the dollars will do as I won't see done for 'em. That's the point of what I want said, but I guess you'll put it to Him sorter polite—which I can't do, being only a rough man as struck gold an' made his pile. An' you might just tell Him, if He's mad with me for cussing an' such-like, which I've done a sight of in my time, that I'd take it real kind of Him if He'd let it pass fer the kid's sake, an' I'll do my level best not to offend agin."

It is doubtful how much of this harangue the Curé understood, but no doubt the message reached the ear it was intended for, without a syllable being lost.

Day and night for a week the Curé and his villagers prayed hard, and the little American would come and stand in the door of the church watching them with a wistful face and muttering to himself: "Keep Him reminded. . . . Don't let Him forget Frankie. . . ."

And He did not forget Frankie. The crisis of the illness passed and the child began to mend rapidly. Not only that; the delicacy that had made his life such an anxiety to his father seemed to have passed away with it. There was now a chance of Frankie growing into as strong a man as one would wish to see. The millionaire's thanksgiving was characteristic.

"Jest you tell Him as I think He's real grit. . . . A gentleman every time. . . . An' He's took my apology like a man. . . . I've heard missionaries an' folk talk about Him way back, an' a queer sorter kind some of 'em made Him out. Now I know Him myself, an' I'll back Him up every time fer the future, jest you tell Him. An' if ever I catch anyone playin' it low down on Him, or any of His folk, wall, I jest reckon they'll have to deal with Hiram Sykes, an' he's a tough customer."

And he kept his word. Many and many a poor lad had cause to bless the day that brought Frankie back to life. Hiram Sykes had made a bargain with the Creator and he stuck to it like a man.

Before he took his son away and the summer waned the American insisted on making M. le Curé a present. He had been most generous to the villagers, and from them he tried to find out what M. le Curé refused to tell him, namely, the gift he most desired. It was Jean Marie Baptiste, the blacksmith, whom he sounded on the subject. The forge was the rendezvous of all the gossips in the place.

"What M. le Curé would like best? Tenez, monsieur, but two angels for the sanctuary, to be sure!"

"Angels?" said Hiram. "Wall, I've an almighty pile of dollars, but I guess it would take more dollars than even I've got to buy angels, even if I knew where to get 'em!"

"True, monsieur, they are dear, very dear! Those at M. le Mesurier's are at least two thousand five hundred francs, and they are small."

"M. le Mesurier's? I guess he's the jeweller in the next town; but how does he get the angels?" said Hiram, in a state of great mystification.

"He makes them, monsieur."

"Makes angels?"

"Yes, monsieur. In gold and silver."

"Now we're gettin' clearer! So the Curé wants angels, does he?"

Then the whole story came out and, as a natural consequence, M. le Curé got his angels, even more beautiful ones than those in the Cathedral.

The great wish of his heart gratified, M. le Curé was, for a time, quite happy, but by and by the angels began to prey upon his mind. Such a thing as a robbery was unknown in the village, but he suddenly developed an extraordinary fear of thieves. No matter what he was doing, he would spring up and rush into the church at the slightest sound. Then he took to getting up two or three times in the night to go and see if his angels were all right. This, of course, led to chills and illness. His parishioners began to wish M. le Curé's angels had never come.

The following autumn and winter were cold and stormy. The crops suffered, the floods were out, and as a consequence, famine and sickness were rife in the land. M. le Curé's village was the one that suffered most. He helped his people all he

could. When they had nothing left, he gave them of his own scanty store, and begged for them, but there came a day when he was at the end of his resources. He could not go out among his people because he could not face them empty-handed. The tender old heart was almost broken with anguish. He could not sit still, for the cries of little hungry children were in his ears, the pinched faces and haggard eyes of the villagers were ever present in his mind's eye. He crept into the church to pray, and, as the newly-turned graves in the little churchyard met his sight, the tears ran down his withered cheeks.

"Lord spare my people!" he prayed, and as he prayed, a sickly ray of sunshine flickered in at the chancel window and touched something bright. It was a golden angel. Then the ray flickered across to the second angel, and so it kept drifting from one to the other like a ghostly finger, and somehow M. le Curé could not pray another word. He could only kneel with his eyes fixed on the angels. Two voices were busy in his ears. One said:

"Sell the angels. They are worth thousands of francs. Sell them, and help the people."

Said the other voice: "Don't! It would be robbing the Lord."

"Manon Bart's baby is dying for want of food—and she has lost two already."

"Why should you rob your church of its only glory?"

And so they went on, first one voice, then the other, while M. le Curé knelt motionless. The finger of light was getting tired of wavering. It ran up and out of the window impatiently, and then, as if repenting, came hastily back, and to M. le Curé seemed to point reproachfully to the bent figures with their shrouding wings.

The struggle was a bitter one, but before the light vanished again in cloud, M. le Curé had fought and won his battle. The ray came back later, but there was nothing for it to glitter on. The two pedestals were empty and the little ray of sunshine ran back with a laugh to tell its fellows, and they all danced for joy round M. le Curé, who, with something heavy under his cloak, was travelling towards the town as fast as his jaded, half-starved steed would carry him.

"Ah!" he exclaimed. "Thank God, the clouds are breaking!" and the sunbeams laughed again.

Manon Bart's baby did not die, and the money for which the golden angels were sold stemmed the tide of sickness and want, and brought prosperity back to the village.

That first night was very bitter to M. le Curé, who felt as if he had torn some part of himself away and sold it. He rose from his bed, which sleep refused to visit, and stole into the church to gaze upon the empty pedestals; but, behold! they were empty no longer! Two worshipping figures bent there still. In answer to his wondering glance, a sweet voice spoke:

"We are angels of Manon Bart's two children, and our Father, whose face we always see, has sent us here to watch instead of those angels you sold to save our sister's life." Then M. le Curé bent his head in silent humility and contrition, and sought his chamber once again.

In the morning the pedestals were empty and the village carpenter would have removed them, but M. le Curé declined to let him, saying:

"The angels are there still."

Then the people wondered, till he told them of his vision of the night, and some smiled and said: "The good Curé was tired with his ride and dreamt it," but others believed, among them, Manon Bart, and when her little child could walk, she would take her to the church and show her the empty pedestals and tell her the wonderful story, and in time the child came to be called "The Sister of the Sanctuary Angels."

## WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

THE LIMIT OF TREE GROWTH ON THE HILLS.

IN a sheltered corrie with a south-westerly aspect we recently found several flourishing trees at what seemed to us to be an exceptional elevation. A short time later we had occasion to revisit the spot, and by the aid of an aneroid determined the elevation at which the trees grew to be 2,200ft. above sea-level. This is by over 100ft. the highest altitude at which we have seen vigorous tree growth, although we have seen seedlings at much greater heights—a young mountain ash at 2,600ft. and a young pine at 2,700ft. The trees in the corrie above-mentioned were birches and rowans, and were in vigorous growth, reaching a height of 15ft. or more. We had passed by the corrie many times before we realised that it held any tree growth, for during the summer months the trees in their green foliage harmonised so closely with the grass covering the hillside as to be practically invisible except at close quarters. It was thus quite of the nature of a surprise to us when we passed the glen one early autumn morning and saw in the corrie above us a mountain ash in all the beauty of its rich autumn tints. We had on several previous occasions met with birches growing in a more or less flourishing state up to the 2,000ft. level, but we do not remember having seen a Scots fir of any



height at this elevation, though in a certain glen they very closely approach the 2,000ft. level. The limit of tree growth in the Highlands is much lower at the present day than was the case in former centuries, for one repeatedly comes across the remains of fir trees in peat bogs up to a height of close on 3,000ft. This ancient wood is extremely resinous, and as it burns in a truly astonishing manner, it is much used by stalkers and shepherds as firewood.

#### AN IMPRISONED STAG.

We noticed, a short time ago, a stag inside a small plantation which was enclosed by a high deer fence. The beast when we saw him was gazing angrily through the fence at a more fortunate relative which was the possessor of a number of hinds, and was roaring angrily from his prison. We discovered from the local stalker that the unfortunate animal had been held a prisoner in the plantation for close on two years. During a severe snowstorm a heavy wreath of snow had quite obliterated the fence at a certain point of the plantation, so that this particular stag—in all probability in search of shelter and feeding—had crossed over the fence and had remained in his new-found quarters, not realising that as the snow melted his means of retreat would be cut off. He is now held a prisoner until the next heavy storm covers the fence and releases him from his captivity.

#### THE WEIGHTS OF STAGS ON THE EAST AND WEST COASTS.

One cannot help being struck by the marked superiority in weight held by the stags of the West Coast forests as compared to those having their quarters in the high-lying forests in the central and eastern districts of Scotland. Perhaps the Island of Rum holds the heaviest stags, but in many of the West Coast forests stags of twenty stone and over are of comparatively common occurrence, whereas in the central and eastern forests a beast of this weight is quite exceptional. The western forests, as a general rule, hold fewer stags than those to the east, but the main reason for the heavy weights of the West Coast stags is undoubtedly the excellence of the feeding. The climate is very much milder than is the case in the high-lying forests to the east, and the grass retains its nourishment through the winter. The snowfalls, too, are much less severe, for the low grounds of the western forests extend, in many cases, to sea-level, whereas in the central districts even the lowest parts of the forests are above the 1,000ft. contour line. The grass is thus much earlier in "coming away" on the ground bordering the Atlantic, and the copious rains of the West Coast also favour its growth. In the high-lying parts of the central districts of Scotland it is usually late June before a vigorous growth of grass takes place, and even then the grass is very dependent on the weather of June and July, for not infrequently cold winds and snow squalls descend on the hills even at midsummer and destroy or temporarily check the growth of vegetation on the high grounds. In a certain corrie we know well the stags are small beasts as a rule, but are comparatively tame. A watcher has his hut in the corrie, and from it we have seen, at daybreak, a company of stags feeding on the sweet grass not rooyods from the bothy. During the months of autumn when the nights are inky dark we have listened from the bothy door to the tramp of the stags on the hillside above us, and sometimes even some confiding beast would approach to

within a few yards and would banish all sleep by his roarings, until he retired under a well-directed fire of peats.

#### THE BACK-END OF THE SALMON-FISHING.

Not for many years has the salmon-fishing on the Royal Dee been so disappointing as was the case during the last few weeks of the present season. Until the end of November the river had been running at summer level—and often well below it—for many weeks, and the fish were quite unable to enter the river. Then the water began to rise considerably, but there was no run of fish, and it was surmised that the salmon which would, in the ordinary course of events, have ascended the Dee had worked their way up the coast-line and had been attracted to the Spey. The latter river benefited more by the rains coming from a westerly direction, and as a result not infrequently was at a good fishing level when the Dee was as clear as crystal and quite unfishable. With the exception of a thirty-six-pounder, which was taken in the Dee during the last days of the season, little or nothing was done in the closing week, and one heard of waters which should have yielded one hundred salmon or more giving a mere half-a-dozen fish! In a well-known estuary north of the Dee the number of salmon showing themselves was quite remarkable, and testified to the difficulty which these fish were experiencing in ascending the river.

#### SALMON LEAPING A FALL.

We spent a number of days during the month of October in observing the efforts of countless salmon to ascend a certain well-known fall on the upper reaches of the Dee. We had the fish under observation for many hours, and under varied conditions, as regards the volume of water passing the falls, and so far as our observations went not a single salmon succeeded in passing the linn. The number of fish leaping the falls increased daily until, on October 22nd—after a marked rise of the river—a salmon hurled itself against the rapids every two or three seconds. Quite 90 per cent. of the fish were red—in some cases quite black—and we did not once see a single really clean fish. The majority of the salmon were about 8lb. in weight, but we noted one or two heavy fellows close on 20lb., and occasionally a sea-trout was seen. Before the rise of the water the fish had been able to pass the linn until they were brought up by the last fall of all. In the pool beneath this fall a large rock had been deposited by a spate, and as a result the fish were unable to "take off" for their final leap. For a considerable distance below the fall the water was a seething mass of foam, and the fish had very considerable difficulty in making their way up the rush. On their arrival at the foot of the fall they found only two "lies," one on either side of the pool. In one of these lies the water was only a few inches deep, and we often saw a salmon lying in a very exhausted state in water quite insufficient to cover him. We noted that the vast majority of the fish "took off" much too soon for the all-important leap, and often fell absurdly short of their mark. Others would leap almost at right angles to the fall, and constantly we saw salmon strike themselves against the rocks with a resounding smack and fall back into the water in a dazed condition. We noticed that the salmon which surmounted the rushes most successfully were those which did not leap clear of the water, but bored their way through the rush with great power and speed.

SETON GORDON.

## THE SKIP AND HIS WAYS.

**I** DOUBT if there be any great game in which the leader of the team is thrust into so prominent a position as is a curling skip. You may watch a football or a cricket match for long enough without discovering the respective captains, but as soon as you take up your place at the rinkside your eye is drawn at once to the opposing skips. They take the centre of the stage, plan and carry out every move in the campaign, issue their decrees and in large measure accept the responsibility for victory or defeat. Their sway is—or should be—absolute. There is no room among the other players for initiative; it is their

sole endeavour to obey, to the best of their ability. It is for this reason that personality counts for so much in curling. It

is the prime object of the skip to get out of his men the best that is in them. He must not only know their play, and be well acquainted with the running of their stones. He must know their temperament and be well acquainted with their behaviour in the stress of action. He must be ready with the word of encouragement that will keep his lead from losing heart, or the word of rebuke that will keep his back-hand from growing careless. He must be able to maintain a calm demeanour when all is well, and a cheerful



Ward Muir.

CHEERFUL AND VOLUBLE.

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outlook when things are going to pieces, and he must be able in a tight place to inspire his player with that little touch of extra confidence that will lift him above his normal form.

From his commanding post at the tee-head the skip surveys the battle-field, his two sweepers on either side, and his player on the crampit awaiting instructions before he delivers his stone. As his directions must carry, through the din of a vigorous bonspiel, a distance of forty yards, he must shout lustily (which in itself gives him an air of imperious command), and as there is often much to explain in the situation, the occasion lends itself to eloquence. Thus has come about that extraordinarily rich vocabulary of curling words and phrases which imparts to the game much of its distinctive flavour. It is wonderfully rich in simile and metaphor, full of imagination, embellished by the play both of humour and of pathos. The spectator of a big bonspiel, in fact, without any knowledge whatever of the points of the game, will generally find quite enough to interest and amuse him in the deportment of the players.

It is almost a tradition that the skip be both eloquent and cheerful—though there are notable exceptions to the rule. It is almost a tradition that he should abstain from any word of blame, that he should maintain an attitude of belief that all is for the best. There is nothing more striking about the game—in its native land, at any rate—than this generous attitude of appreciation with which your skip regards your efforts. So far does it go that he will often look upon your successful shot as a special favour conferred upon himself personally.

"Thank you for that one," he will say, and in moments of fine achievement he is not content with mere approbation. He will specially call upon you to come up "and have a look at it"; he will shake you cordially by the hand; he may even (in a crisis) fall upon your neck. It is a fine thing to see him desert his post in the house—when you have shipped your opponent's winner with the last stone of the head—and stride down the ice with outstretched hand to meet you. "You for a curler!" he will say, or "Man, I kennt a' the time that you could dae it!"

But it is a still finer thing to see his magnanimity in the hour of failure. You have been told to lay a guard and have come roaring up the rink, carrying out his winner and leaving the other side two shots, and you approach in fear and trembling to hear his verdict. He stands scratching a rueful head as he surveys the wreck.

"Eh, man, that was a peety," he will say. "The ice is getting awfu' keen. But never mind. It was go your blame." Or you have been asked to draw to an open tee at the close of a head and have miserably hogged your stone.

He will assure you that it must have caught a straw or something, or it would certainly have reached the tee, for it was "awfu' weel set doon." At all times the voluble skip displays an immense geniality. When asked the score, he will never admit to the spectator that he is more than "a wee bit doon the noo"; or, if he is leading by a huge majority, he will say that it is a grand game and he is holding his own so far.

He calls upon his sweepers in clarion tones, egging them on to great feats of strength and agility to bring up a failing stone, working upon them with every art of persuasion, flattery, command, or entreaty. To each player about to deliver his stone he will give a careful digest

of the situation, full of descriptive touches and pithy observations. But so great is the strain upon his voice, when the ice holds day after day, that he is often at the last reduced to silence and exasperation by the state of his throat.

One such skip I remember well, whose voice never lasted him for more than three days—in spite of frequent applications of an eucalyptus lozenge—and who was invariably found croaking and whispering miserably on the fourth. There is no question but that this catastrophe had a serious effect upon his men, and for myself, I was always ungenerous enough to rejoice when I met him (in the course of play for the club medal) during the second, silent period. For then he was reduced to signs, to him a contemptible substitute.

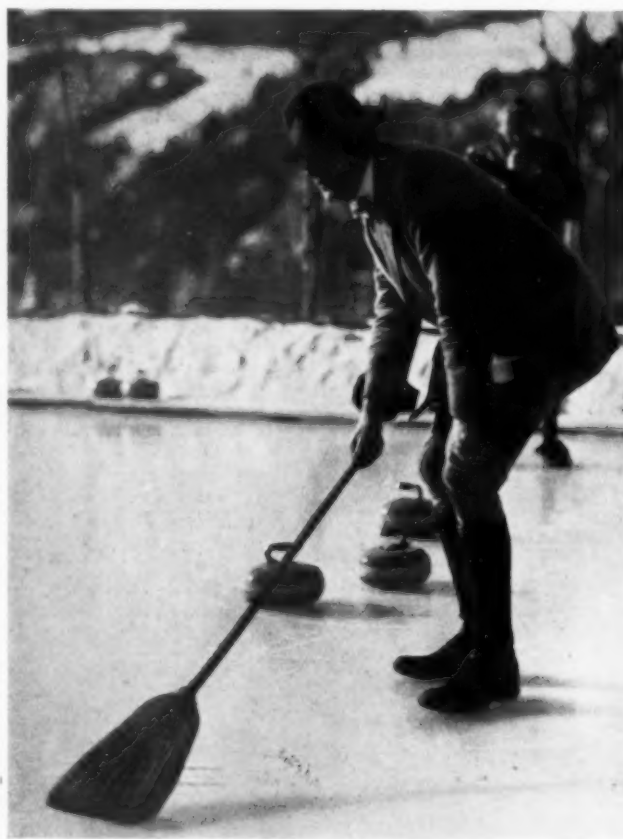
There is also the skip of the anxious, "canny" type. He may be known by his puckered brow, his air of immense concentration upon the matter in hand. You feel at once that he is so wholly wrapped up in the fortunes of the game as to be completely oblivious of the world outside. If the sun were to fall from the sky, he would hardly observe the phenomenon so long as there was light enough to complete his end. He is continually watching, studying, weighing and considering the position of the stones about his feet, as if trying to wring from them the hidden secret of the development of the head. He gives his directions with appalling earnestness, and as each running stone comes up the rink he suffers a fresh agony of suspense lest he sweep it too far or not far enough. He never feels himself secure till the last stone of the game is played. But I have always hoped and believed that, when all is over and his side has won, the consequent triumph and satisfaction are sufficient to repay him for the ordeal of the game itself.

There is also his counterpart in the seemingly careless skip, who conceals his burning anxiety beneath a casual and nonchalant manner and makes a special point of gossiping pleasantly with his opponent. You will find that you will have to call his attention from time to time to the game, when his player is awaiting instructions, and he is eating an apple or watching another rink. And this is strange, for not the minutest point escapes him. But it is seldom that he can maintain his attitude to the bitter end. With startling suddenness it may desert

him in a crisis, when something almost like a sob escapes him.

A sturdy and dogged fighter is the phlegmatic skip. He stands with a hand in his pocket and a pipe in his mouth, his expression fixed and reflective, and it would seem that victory or defeat come alike to him. He is chary of words, and his directions are exceedingly terse and to the point. He will carefully survey the position, weigh two or more alternatives, come to his conclusion and bang down his broom on the ice. "Play that, Robbie, wi' the wee finger!" (you must pronounce the last word to rhyme with singer). He often resorts to signs, not from sheer necessity, like my eloquent friend already described, but by preference. His attitude implies such perfect confidence in his men that a single word of guidance is enough. But if he has a fault, it is that he is apt to be led away into too great confidence and expect his player to understand points in the situation that he has no means of knowing. But he is generally a man of iron nerve, depending much upon the power of his own last stone.

Curling is being very rapidly refined and elaborated into a game of exquisite precision—and increasing monotony. It is devoutly to be hoped that this process of rubbing off corners



Ward Muir.

ANXIOUSLY WATCHING THE RUNNING STONE.

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and smoothing over rough places will not be carried so far as to reduce the behaviour of skips to a common pattern. It is not at all likely that anything so distressing

will come to pass, for there is nothing finer about the game than the magnificent scope that it opens up for force of individuality.

BERTRAM SMITH.

## HARRIERS AND BEAGLES.



From an Engraving

HARRIER.

After P. Reinagle.

THERE is a much greater difference of type and character in harriers and beagles than there is in foxhounds in the present day, though, no doubt, the influence of the Harrier Stud Book will, as time goes on, tend to bring harriers more and more to a common standard, and to assimilate these by careful selection to the fashionable type of foxhounds. But, in fact, there will probably always remain some lovers of hare-hunting who will cling to the old-fashioned sorts of harriers. At the present time we have at least four leading kinds of harriers—the old West Country harrier, still to be found in the kennels of Sir John Amory, of

the Axe Vale, of the Cotley, and in some other West Country packs. These hounds are closely allied to, if they are not descended

from, the old staghound and, if looks go for anything, are very like some of the old French packs in Normandy. This similarity does not necessarily, though it may possibly, signify a direct relationship. Hare-hunting is so ancient a sport and the harehound was evolved so early, that it is probable that the type most suitable was bred to all over Europe. A harehound needs patience, a very fine nose, some pace and infinite perseverance. The quality of holding to the scent of the hunted



From an Engraving

THE NEASDEN HARRIERS.

After W. Barraud.

animal is of great value in this form of sport. Now, the West Country white harrier, though he is by no means a potterer, is a very close hunter, and once settled to the chase of a particular animal does not easily leave the line. Then, as we go further north, we find a black and tan harrier of the kind of which the most famous example is the pack at Bexhill in Sussex, which has a long and authentic pedigree. These are supposed to represent the old Southern hound. They are light, active hounds, black and tan, with long ears and hare feet, but with plenty of pace and most musical tongues. Hunting over the low marshlands of Sussex, they require to be able to go fast, or they would never catch their hares. Almost side by side with them, in the very next country, are a big, blue mottled type, very close hunters, with deep voices, and a great deal of bone and substance; and although very apt to be crooked according to the foxhound man's standard, they are quite equal to catching the stout hares of the Pevensy flats or those of the Sussex Downs.

In Lancashire we find hounds of much the same type—the Holcombe, for example—and then going further north again, in the Fells, lighter hounds, quite able on occasion to give a good account of a fox if they find him. Lastly, we have the Stud Book harrier, which is defined as a hound that has hunted hare for three generations. Speaking generally, these hounds have a strong cross of foxhound blood, very often from Belvoir. In such packs as the High Peak, the Boddington, the Bath and County (when I knew them), and many others, we find necks and shoulders, feet and legs, as good as in most foxhound kennels, while the strain of harrier blood gives them the steadiness and perseverance necessary in hare-hunting. When, however, hounds of this type chance upon a first-rate hare, they can drive at a pace which will extend a good horse to live with them. The fact is, in hunting the hare different hounds are required for different countries and also for different methods of hunting. These have always existed among hare-hunters. We sometimes picture our ancestors pounding along after a slow, pottering, dwelling lot of hounds. Such, no

doubt, there were, but there were always others who loved pace. Of one huntsman of the early part of the century we are told that "he tally-ho'd his hares when they were in view, holloa'd his hounds forward, cap in hand, to a point, and by forcing his game to fly beyond their knowledge of the country in which they were bred had runs of extraordinary duration." And later on, describing the same pack, the writer dilates upon their evenness of size and their uniformity of pace, showing that they had been drafted "top and tail," as the phrase was, to enable them to pack together to perfection. We shall note, too, in the pictures illustrating this article, the look of

quality in the hounds. But packs of these well-bred, speedy hounds on a cold scent, with a ringing, twisting hare, and on ground foiled by cattle or sheep, would put their noses down and work out every turn, so that they rarely lost or left behind them a hunted hare. There is no doubt that hare-hunting with such a pack, not too small or too slow to get along, nor so big as to overmatch their hares altogether, provides extraordinary sport. Of late years, however, we have returned to a more quiet style

of handling harriers, for, after all, the charm of the sport is in the working of the hounds, and few modern harrier masters would agree with the huntsman of the beginning of the nineteenth century (1804) who mobbed and hustled his hares to death with a pack of dwarf foxhounds, because, he said, the hare was good to eat and you could not kill too many of them.

Nowadays we do not value the hunted hare for our dinner-tables, as did our forefathers, and a great many masters give the hare to the hounds, with considerable benefit to the working of their packs. But there is one factor in hare-hunting from which we cannot escape; the hare has a far weaker scent than a fox, and this when hard pressed she seems almost to lose, so that the harrier must be able to hunt closely, and must always have a tender nose, or we shall have no sport at all. Then, again, we require a different hound for different countries—a small, light hound, for example, would be out of



From an Engraving

THE SWAFFHAM HARRIERS.

After H. Hall.



W. A. Roush.

FORESTER.

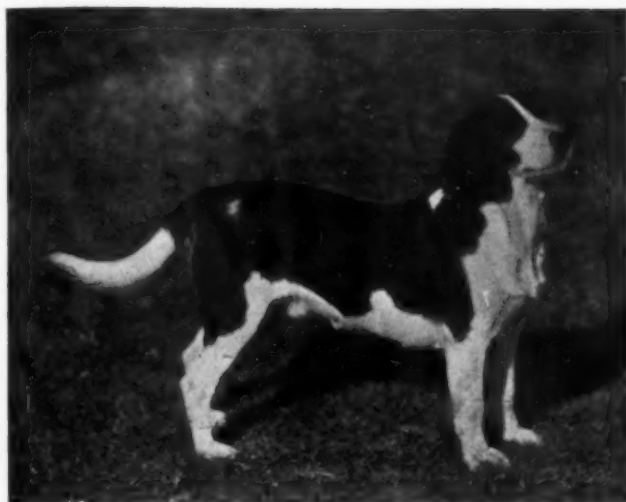
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PRIMROSE.

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COUNCILLOR.

place in moorland hunting; he would be smothered in the heather and bracken. In a marsh country big hounds are desirable, or they would be drowned in the drains. In a rough, arable country, nose and steadiness and perseverance are necessary, whereas on the open downs a small, quick hound will give us the best sport; and what is true of harriers is true also of beagles, with the exception of the fact that in the latter case we want a hound that we can follow on foot. It is clear, from the old pictures, that our forefathers liked a heavy-bodied, slow dog, and there was a type of beagle at one time, if we may believe the old pictures, which was not altogether unlike the French basset-hound. But the tendency of modern beagle masters is to breed a hound which is, in every respect, a miniature foxhound. Yet even this does not seem to be new, for one of our pictures, more than a hundred years old (1803) shows a type of beagle not very unlike the representatives of modern kennels selected to illustrate this article. The modern hounds have, perhaps, more quality, but as far as legs and feet are concerned, it is evident that the standard of the old breeders was much the same then as it is now. The size of the beagle seems to have settled at from twelve inches to fourteen inches, though occasionally we find among ten-inch beagles a miniature foxhound like Lord Linlithgow's Lantern, which so delighted the judges at the Ranelagh Hound Show. Still, for sport I think the Springhill Councillor, combining as he does quality, substance and sufficient pace for the fastest runner, is by far the most useful dog, while in rough countries, like Lancashire, or where the enclosures are small and the fences ragged, the fifteen or sixteen inch blue mottle, such as I remember in Sussex, and such as I believe are still to be found in the North, are probably the best for those countries. A beagle must have three virtues — it

must be persevering, which means that stamina and constitution are necessary, it must have nose and it must have tongue.

Even the best runners are liable when there is a scent to be distanced by the pack, and if the hounds did not throw their tongues freely, they would soon be lost altogether. After all, to the lover of hounds there are few things more delightful than a good day with a pack of beagles, handled like foxhounds, and able under fairly favourable conditions to kill their hare in a reasonable time; as an object-lesson in hound-work there is no better school than to run with a pack of beagles. I know packs which are sometimes ridden to, but I think this spoils the little hounds and destroys the character of the sport. It is, of course, necessary in some countries to have one mounted



LANTERN.

man, but he should always ride wide of the pack, his duty being to keep hounds out of forbidden coverts. Some Masters of Foxhounds do not care much about having harriers or beagles in their country; but I think the packs do little harm and a great deal of good. They disturb hedgerow-haunting and

outlying foxes, and drive them back into the covert, and besides this, they keep alive the love of hunting in the country people. Beagling is a sport which can be enjoyed by many to whom fox-hunting is impossible; but the man who hunts with harriers and beagles may be trusted to have a soft spot in his heart for hunting, whatever form it may take. X.



From an Engraving.

BEAGLES

After P. Reinagle.



WHEN the decent and orderly proceedings of the Grand Junction Canal are observed, it must not be forgotten that as recently as 1700, when Moll made his map of Herts, the then river north of Moor Park, Rickmansworth, had a variety of courses. At a still earlier date the land was no more than marsh and river-bed, slowly reclaimed with the high ground of the park to the south-east. When Nevil Archbishop of York acquired the manor, he enclosed six hundred acres as a park and built a palace, which Lytton describes out of his inner consciousness in *The Last of the Barons* as having a "façade of double arches and Italian garden" gone these four centuries into limbo. This building stood about a third of a mile to the north-east of the present house, and is marked on a map of 1700. It would appear from this that it was not destroyed to find materials for the new house. Its present site cannot be exactly fixed, for the traces of foundations to which Cussans refers in his history published in 1879 have now disappeared. It is likely, however, that the lower garden of the old house was where the Watford Lodge gate now stands. But returning to Archbishop Nevil, we find him inviting Edward IV. to The More in 1471. The gold plate was on the tables for the feast when there came a summons from the King to Windsor, a charge of high treason,

and the swift imprisonment and fall of the Archbishop. When The More was granted to Wolsey, he altered it after his usual sumptuous fashion and kept great state there. Soon after the fall of the Cardinal, Henry VIII. stayed there for some time. The house was well maintained for many years after, for an inventory of 1547 remains with twenty-nine pages that describe one hundred and twenty-five tapestries, and carpets, beds and furniture of great richness.

It has often been noticed in these articles that Hertfordshire estates show a marked instability in their tenure. Moor Park is no exception to what amounts almost to a rule, for there are in the whole county only twelve families who have held their present lands in the male line from before the year 1760. Still more striking, there is none which either in male or female has continued on one estate as far back as 1485, when modern times may be said to have begun with Henry VII.'s accession. The history of Moor Park is further complicated by the fact that the Manor of the Moor, Rickmansworth, was long divided from the Park. In order to make the very long ownership story complete yet reasonably short, the holders of both will be set out in next week's article, so that the ground may be clear to consider the doings of the more interesting personalities among them.



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THE ENTRANCE FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



That some fresh building was done at The More in the first quarter of the seventeenth century is clear from the contract of sale made when the property passed from Philip Earl of Pembroke to Robert Cary Earl of Monmouth in 1631. It is there described as "all that great house or lodge, lately built (!) wherein the Earl and Countess of Bedford lately dwelt; also, all that new garden adjoining to the said house, eastward, lately made by William Earl of Pembroke and that other garden,

place in her enchanting letters to Temple, and in 1653 she refers to his knowing it so well. Unfortunately she says nothing of the house itself. She seems not to have been on altogether good terms with the Franklins, and perhaps did not stay there much. It is annoying, therefore, to find her complaining to Temple that her cousin, Molle, had written her a large and particular description of Moor Park—"nothing can come near his patience in writing it, but my reading on't." No doubt



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LEONT'S GREAT PORTICO.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

with a bowling-green thereto adjoining, etc. . . ." All this is very confusing in view of the notable description of Moor Park by Sir William Temple, an epicurean judge of a fine garden if there ever was one. It is perhaps not generally known that Temple's Moor Park, in Surrey, got that name from the Hertfordshire house. His future wife, Dorothy Osborne, who lived not far away, at Chicksands Priory, was cousin to the Franklin who bought Moor Park in 1652. There are mentions of the

it bored her very much, but we should be grateful if the account had survived. Temple married Dorothy in 1655, and they spent their honeymoon at Moor Park. The gardens must then have been of extraordinary beauty to extort from him in 1685 an appreciation so informing that it is quoted almost in full:

The perfectest figure of a garden I ever saw, either at home or abroad, was that of Moor Park in Hertfordshire, when I knew it about thirty years ago. It was made by the Countess of Bedford, esteemed among the greatest wits



Copyright.

THE GARDEN FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of her time, and celebrated by Doctor Donne ; and with very great care, excellent contrivance, and much cost ; but greater sums may be thrown away without effect or honour, if there want sense in proportion to money, or if Nature be not followed ; which I take to be the great rule in this, and perhaps in everything else.

Because I take the garden I have named to have been in all kinds the most beautiful and perfect, at least in the figure and disposition, that I have ever seen, I will describe it for a model to those that meet with such a situation, and

are above the regards of common expense. It lies on the side of a hill, (upon which the house stands) but not very steep. The length of the house, where the best rooms, and of most use or pleasure are, lies upon the breadth of the garden, the great parlours open into the middle of a terrace gravel-walk that lies even with it, and which may be, as I remember, about three hundred paces long, and broad proportion ; the border set with standard laurels, and at large distances, which have the beauty of orange-trees out of flower and fruit : from this walk are three descents by many stone steps, in the middle and at each



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FROM THE NORTH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."





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## THE TEMPLE OF THE WINDS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

end, into a very large parterre. This is divided into quarters by gravel-walks, and adorned with two fountains and eight statues in the several quarters; at the end of the terrace-walk are two summer-houses, and the sides of the parterre are ranged with two large cloisters, open to the garden, upon arches of stone, and ending with two other summer-houses even with the cloisters, which are paved with stone, and designed for walks of shade, there being none other in the whole parterre. Over these two cloisters are two terraces covered with lead, and fenced with balusters; and the passage into these airy walks, is out of the

two summer-houses at the end of the first terrace-walk. The cloister facing the south is covered with vines, and would have been proper for an orange-house, and the other for myrtles, or other more common greens; and had, I doubt not, been cast for that purpose, if this piece of gardening had been then in as much vogue as it is now.

From the middle of this parterre is a descent by many steps flying on each side of a grotto that lies between them (covered with lead, and flat) into the lower garden, which is all fruit trees ranged about the several quarters of a wilderness



Copyright.

## IN THE PORTICO.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

which is very shady; the walks here are all green, the grotto embellished with figures of shell-rock-work, fountains and water-works. If the hill had not ended with the lower garden, and the wall were not bounded by a common way that goes through the park, they might have added a third quarter of all greens; but this want is supplied by a garden on the other side of the house, which is all of that sort, very wild, shady, and adorned with rough rock-work and fountains.

This was Moor Park, when I was acquainted with it, and the sweetest place, I think, that I have seen in my life, either before or since, at home or abroad; what it is now I can give little account, having passed through several hands that have made great changes in gardens as well as houses; but the remembrance of what it was, is too pleasant ever to forget, and therefore I do not believe to have mistaken the figure of it, which may serve for a pattern to the best gardens of our manners, and that are most proper for our country and climate.

And whoever observes the work upon the best Indian gowns, or the painting upon their best screens or purcellans, will find their beauty is all of this kind, (that is) without order. But I should hardly advise any of these attempts in the figure of gardens among us; they are adventures of too hard achievement for any common hands; and though there may be more honour if they succeed well,



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THE TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE HOUSE FROM THE OLD PLEASURE GROUND: "COUNTRY LIFE."

yet there is more dishonour if they fail, and 'tis twenty to one they will; whereas in regular figures, 'tis hard to make any great and remarkable faults.

It would appear that Temple was unaware of the making of a new garden by William Lord Pembroke, and perhaps to him is due some of the praise given to Lucy Countess of Bedford. It is odd that Temple gives absolutely no description of the house existing in 1655; had it been at all notable he would surely have spared it a few words. However, his description of the garden remains, and it is on this that Mr. Rome Guthrie has based his charming drawing of the old site of Moor Park as it was in the days of its glory. During the period between the end of the Bedford occupation and the purchase of Moor Park by James Duke of Monmouth times were so stormy and the owners changed so quickly that no doubt the old palace, despite the Bedford additions or repairs which justified its being described in 1631 as "lately built," must have fallen into grave disrepair.

In any case, when Monmouth came to build after 1670 he evidently did not think it worth while to alter the existing house, and the glory of the gardens had perhaps already departed. He chose a new site on lower ground for his new home, of which we have only scrappy information of the most tantalising kind. It is described as having been "at the time of its erection esteemed one of the best pieces of brickwork in England," and Salmon, writing before 1728, while Styles was recasing the building, says, "Those that lately have curiously view'd it, could not find one brick decayed." It has been attributed to Wren, but there seems no foundation for the statement. We may assume that Monmouth began building in the early seventies, soon after his purchase of the estate. At this date Wren was desperately busy with St. Paul's and the general rebuilding of London after the Fire, and it is unlikely he would concern himself with work in the country. Speculation is in any case futile, for

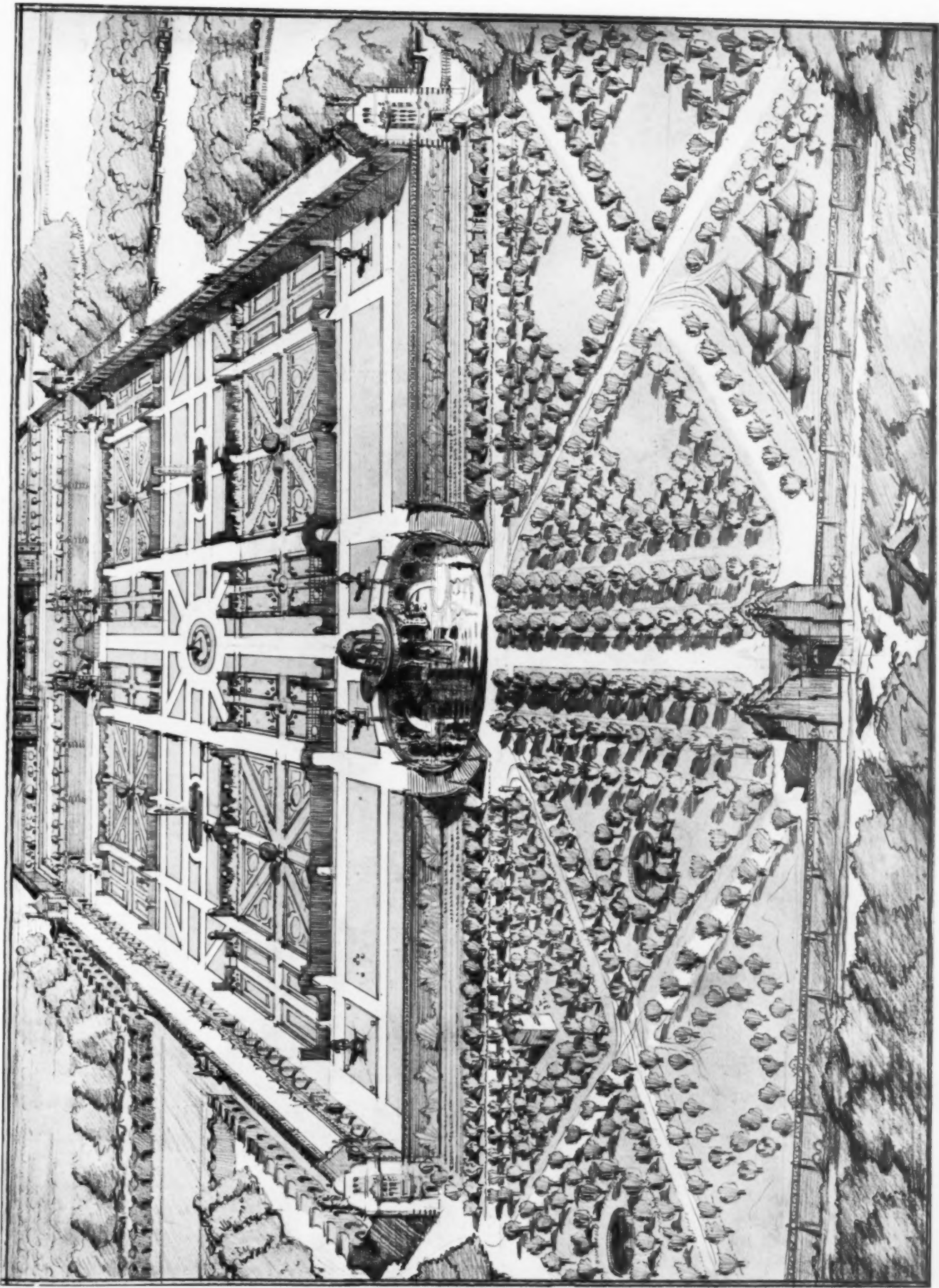


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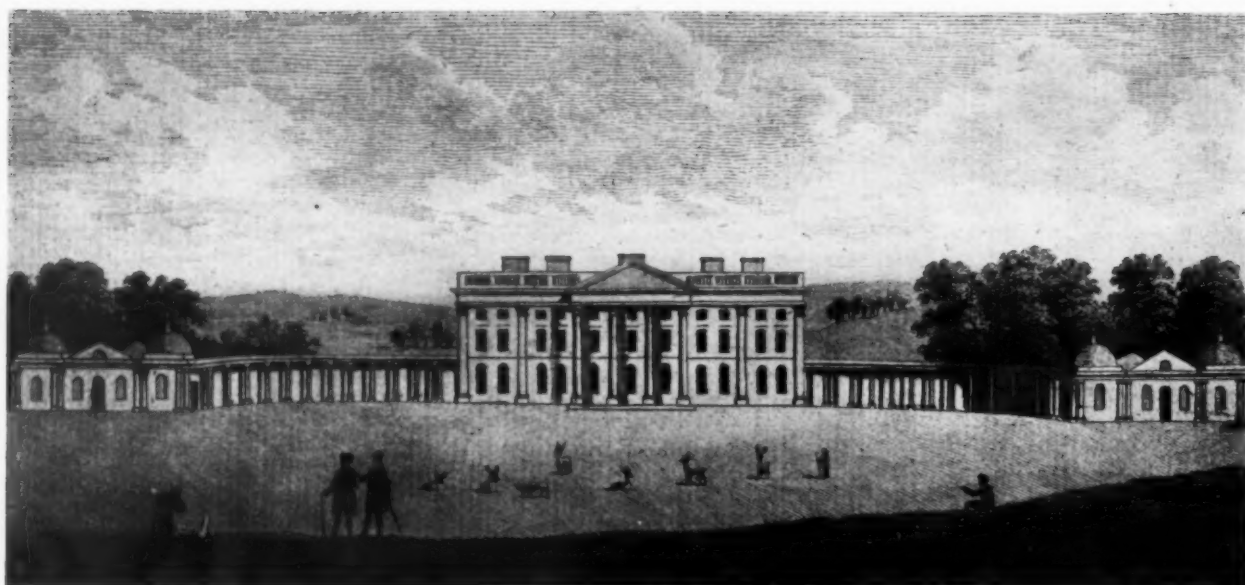
SUNDIAL IN NORTH-EAST GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."





THE OLD GARDENS AT MOOR PARK.  
*Specially drawn by Mr ROME GUTHRIE*



MOOR PARK AS IT WAS BEFORE REMOVAL OF COLONNADE.



Copyright.

THE WHITE DRAWING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

there remains (as far as this writer knows) no picture of the house built by Monmouth. The Duke's London home, Monmouth House, Soho Square, was built for him in 1683 by one Ford, a joiner who turned architect, but that fact is not helpful. It is very irritating that Chauncy, who gave in his *History*, published in 1700, so many views of Hertfordshire houses, should have failed to include one of Moor Park.

In the recent article on Dalkeith Palace reference was made to the Monmouth occupation of the house, and to its sale in 1720 by Anne Duchess of Monmouth and Buccleuch. The buyer was Benjamin H. Styles, whose wealth came from that early and magnificent excursion into company promoting—the South Sea Company. He was brother-in-law to Sir John Eyles, sub-governor of the Bubble, and, thus possessed of inside knowledge, sold out before the Bubble burst. Some of his fortune he spent in employing Giacomo Leoni to refront the house. Some particulars of Leoni will be given next week, but meanwhile it may be said that his great monument is Moor Park, shorn though it now is of the great curved colonnades with their terminal pavilions, which, except for a very small part of the north range, disappeared in 1785. These were wholly an addition to the original Monmouth building, and the lack of them destroys the proportions of the house itself. The lofty portico, for example, would lose its rather stilted look if the great ranges of Tuscan columns remained to create an apparent reduction in its height, and also to spread out the house on the site where it



now looks placed rather at random. This point is apparent when reference is made to the old engraving, now reproduced, which shows the original colonnades.

The interior of the house may be left until our next issue, when it can be more fully illustrated. Meanwhile the changes in its setting can be described. Benjamin Styles died in 1739, and was buried in the chapel at Moor Park, since demolished.

thousand pounds on a drastic remodelling of the park and gardens, his adviser being "Capability" Brown. The best part of his work was the planning of twenty-five acres to the south-east of the house, now known as the Old Pleasure Grounds. Horace Walpole was very contemptuous after a visit in 1760. "I was not much struck with it after all the miracles I had heard that Brown had performed there.



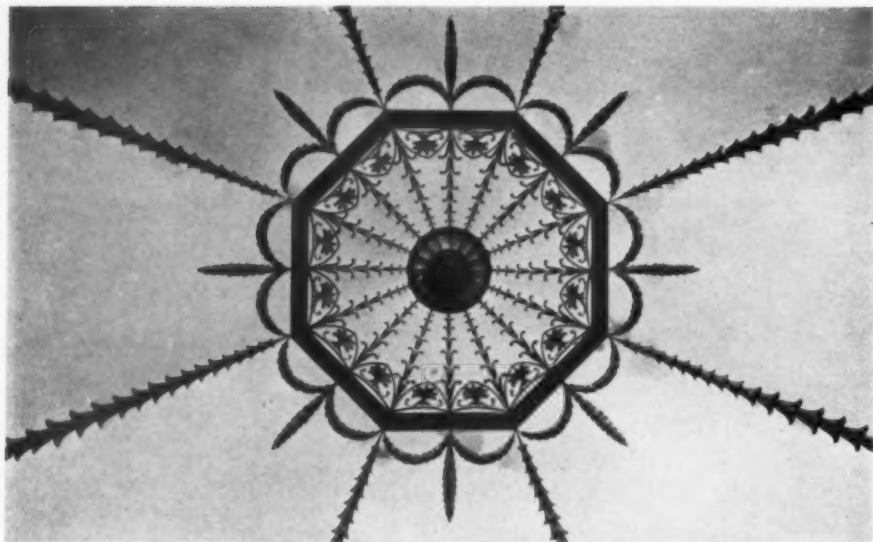
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IN THE DINING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

It is impossible to say how Leoni treated the gardens, for they have since been wholly altered. As Styles spent upwards of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds on the house, it may be that the garden scheme was not very ambitious. From Styles' trustees the property was bought in 1754 by the celebrated Lord Anson, the victor of Cape Finisterre, who spent eighty

He has undulated the horizon in so many artificial mole-hills, that it is full as unnatural as if it was drawn with a rule and compasses." There is little doubt that Walpole would modify his criticism if he could see the Park now that the avenues planted by Brown have come to maturity, and the Old Pleasure Grounds have considerable merit. From the south-east front



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CEILING IN THE TEA-ROOM AT MOOR PARK

"C.L."



Copyright.

IN TEA-ROOM: DESIGNED BY ROBERT ADAM.

"C.L."

of the house a broad walk leads to the stairway and rising terraces, which appear in the illustrations. Beyond is a big pool with an Ionic temple of somewhat stilted proportions on the far bank. It was dedicated to The Winds, and after Dr. Johnson had visited Lord Anson at Moor Park, he wrote on this classical fancy a copy of Latin verse which has been rendered:

A grateful mind I praise! All to the winds he owed,

And so upon the winds a temple he bestowed.

During Lord Anson's ownership the house itself was neglected, and on his death his brother, Thomas Anson, sold the estate to Sir Laurence Dundas, Bart., a successful Army contractor. The decorations in the dining-room done for him by Cipriani are of marked importance. In 1785 Moor Park was bought by Thomas Bates-Rous, who pulled down the wings, which contained a chapel as well as domestic offices, to raise money by the value of the materials—a senseless idea. The next owner to effect a change was the Marquess of Westminster, who altered the gardens and park. To him is due the present design of the formal garden on the north-east front. It remains to be added that opposite the Rickmansworth entrance gates there are other gardens known as the River Garden, in which there is a tea-house designed by Robert Adam. That, however, can be described in next week's issue, which will be concerned more especially with the interiors of Moor Park.

L. W.

## AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION ABROAD

THOSE who wish to inform themselves of the working of agricultural co-operation in other countries ought to obtain the latest *Bulletin of the Bureau of Economic and Social Intelligence*, issued by the International Institute of Agriculture. It is dated August 31st, 1911; but we can easily understand that it must take some months to get so large a collection of statistics and local information into proper shape. The working of co-operation in Germany is best seen by the very carefully summarised report which is given of the Annual Meeting of the Agricultural Co-operative Societies of the German Empire, at the Tivoli Festival Hall, Hanover. There were present over a thousand representatives of the twenty-four thousand German agricultural societies. Not only the German Government, but the Japanese Government were represented. We select for note a few subjects of very wide interest. A question raised was this: "Has the development of co-operative dairies had an unfavourable influence on the food of the rural population?" Generally speaking, the answer was in the negative. To the co-operative dairies can be traced an improvement in the breeding of horned cattle, and the system ensures the ready and scientific utilisation of the milk. So far it is, therefore, beneficial. But the report goes on to make a significant remark, that the hygienic interests of the rural population demand that some effort should be made "to combat the objectionable custom of some who, with a view to money making, do not reserve enough milk for the needs of their own household, thus adversely affecting the dietary of babies and children." It would be instructive to learn what substitute for natural milk is used in the German villages. Do peasants of that country, like our own, buy machine-skimmed milk? Another point which our co-operative societies would do well to study is that the credit co-operative societies have suffered



heavy losses owing to the demands made upon them by the Association of Co-operative Societies and societies for production. There does not seem to have been the same vigilance exerted over the cover on which loans are made that would be shown by a private bank. This probably points to a weakness in the village banks on the co-operative system. We are taking the interesting items as they come, so our readers must not expect these remarks to be logically connected one with another. We jump from banks to a note on the "recent progress of co-operative societies for the utilisation of cattle," and are told that in the province of Hanover experience has shown that the farmers get the best prices for their animals when they unite in co-operative societies. To ensure that, however, the members must bind themselves to place their cattle at the disposal of the society. Professor Sohnrey of Berlin reported on rural thrift, and, practically speaking, it is on this that the agricultural co-operative societies subsist. Therefore, it is recommended that federations and affiliated societies should encourage thrift and make its object known by lectures and courses of instruction. We then come to the detailed reports of various agricultural loan banks. They should be read in the mass, because an extract here and there would not serve any useful purpose. A partial balance-sheet is worse than none.

Among general comments found in the Agenda and Decisions of the twenty-ninth Conference of the Prussian Chambers of Agriculture, we find that interest and confidence in the weather forecasts issued by the Public Meteorological Service are increasing, and it is suggested that as far as this goes the co-operation should be extended to foreign countries. Labour exchanges have been found of great benefit to the Prussian farmer, and it was decided "that the Chambers of Agriculture be immediately recommended to establish labour exchanges, and even to spend large sums and to

try to co-operate with other labour exchanges already existing." The final resolution is to the effect that young lawyers should be obliged to study political economy and practical farming. This is very interesting indeed, especially if it points, as it seems to point, to a deficiency of this kind of knowledge among the rising lawyers of Germany. In East Prussia we note that, as most of the herdsmen are untrained, some of the Chambers of Agriculture have taken steps for the improvement of the technical education of the men. Herdsmen are organised and are registered under three classes, namely, those who have been herdsmen for at least two years; those who possess land or a farm; and those who are interested in encouraging the work of the association. All this points to a living and practical interest in agriculture that we might do much worse than emulate.

The current questions in Austria are equally worthy of attention, although the circumstances are very different, and the questions that arose mainly concerned drainage associations and co-operative grazing societies in Austrian Silesia. In Russia agricultural co-operative associations appear to be making great progress. The history of the founding of the various bodies might furnish hints to those who are working on the same lines in this country. Their character may be judged from the fact that out of one hundred and thirteen associations seventy-six are dairies, thirteen viticultural, fruit-growing and horticultural societies, five bee masters' societies, three livestock improvement societies, three seed-growing societies, one sericulture society, one starch factory, ten societies for utilisation of agricultural machinery (Retlo model) and one co-operative association for agricultural improvements. The movement is still young in Russia, but it is vigorous, and may be expected to show important results before long. In Switzerland co-operation, after some vicissitudes of fortune, is now going forward very vigorously.

## FURNITURE OF THE XVII & XVIII CENTURIES.

### FURNITURE AT DEVONSHIRE HOUSE.

IN treating of the school of English gilt furniture of the first half of the eighteenth century, it must be remembered that it was but a continuation of what was first introduced here during the reign of Charles II. from the French, Italian and other fashionable foreign Courts with which this country was at that time in close relationship. The many vast domestic dwellings that were being erected by such architects as Vanbrugh, Ripley and Kent demanded, to complete their schemes, decoration and furniture large in style and assertive in proportion; and what we may now consider as ponderous or vulgar in taste must have looked exactly right when placed in their original surroundings, where all was dealt out with a lavish hand in accordance with the ostentatious taste of the contemporary aristocracy; while the lighter designs of Chippendale and his successors would have appeared puny

and insignificant among the heavily-moulded panelling, the wall-hangings and upholstery of large-patterned Genoa velvets, the wide-skirted coats, long periwigs, voluminous brocaded sacques and solid physiognomies of early Georgian times.

Kent could not possibly have designed a tenth of the furniture that has been attributed to him, for it has become a custom to assign all gilt chairs and tables ornamented with sphinxes, cherubs' heads, heavy shells, scrolls and meaningless repetition ending vaguely in scale pattern to this architect. There must have been many other designers of this ornate cumbrous style, and probably much was originated as well as executed by the Italian workmen that Kent and Lord Burlington employed.

The furniture at Devonshire House, illustrated in this article, is not representative of the very eccentric types of this



SIDE TABLE IN THE DINING-ROOM.



IN THE DINING-ROOM.

school, the side table in the dining-room alone possessing the unwieldy characteristics. The top, of fine Breschia violet marble, is seven feet long by three feet two inches wide; the frieze on which it rests is carved with the broad wave pattern so frequently seen on these side tables; the legs, six in number, are corbel shaped and extremely solid in form. They are raised on a deep plinth, which also supports two large escallops centring in an acanthus pendant, the concave side of other shells forming the two ends. The table is now painted white and gold, but no doubt was originally wholly gilt; it gives the impression of a rather purposeless mixture of massive architectural ornament, and bears the imprint of Kent in every detail. There is a pair of side tables in the same room; but these are far lighter in construction and graceful in design. The top is divided into inlaid parallelograms of light brown onyx by bands of black marble, edged with a bold nulling of the latter; the scroll-headed legs, in this instance slightly tapered, are carved with acanthus, garrya pendants and scallop pattern. They are united by bold festoons and a pendant basket of fruit carved in the manner of 1725, and yet strongly reminiscent of



CONSOLE TABLE FROM THE BALLROOM.



TABLE FROM THE BALLROOM.

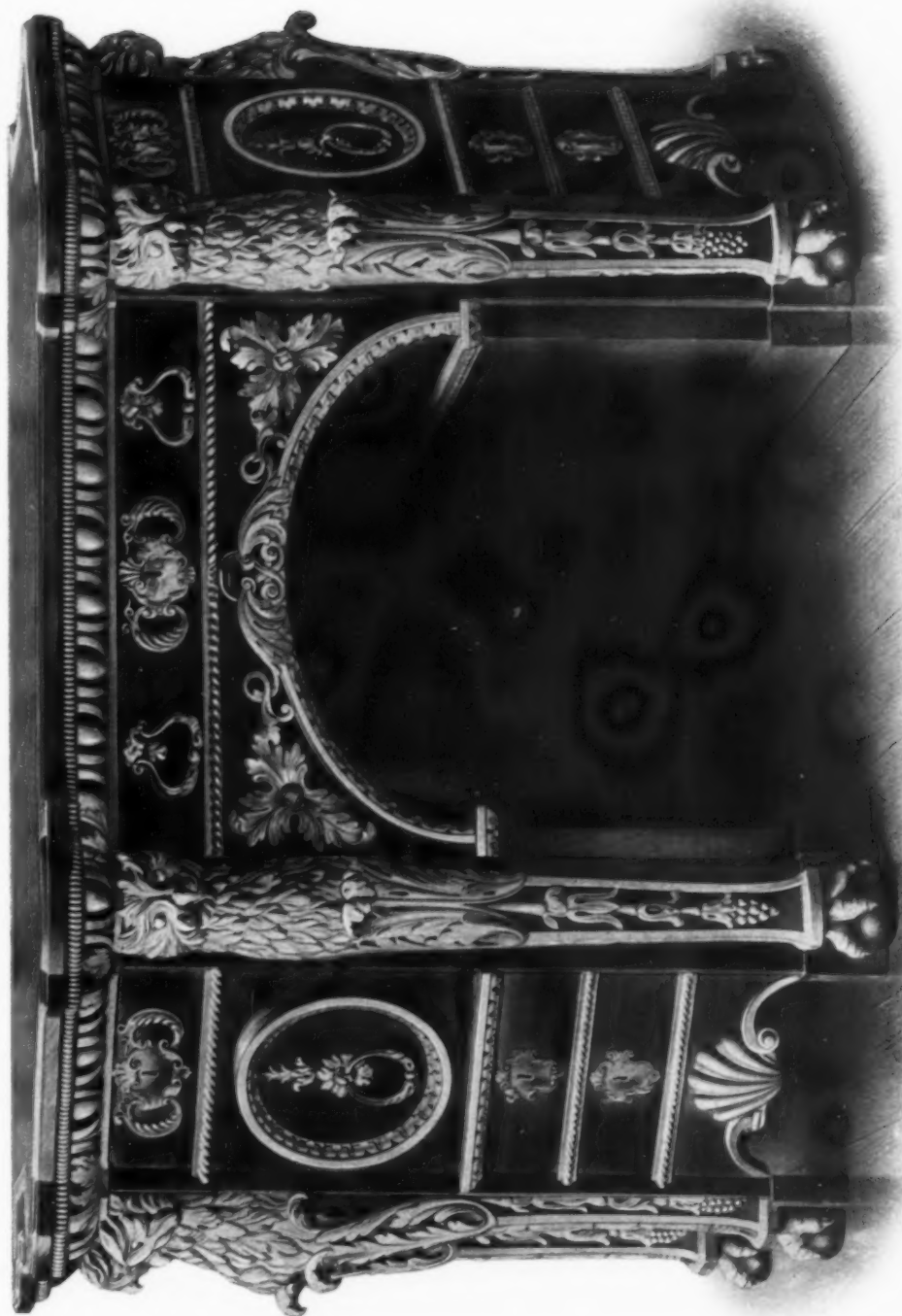


IN THE STAIRCASE-HALL.

Carolean taste. These tables are four feet two inches long by two feet wide.

The console table shown from the ballroom is very representative of Kent, who evidently ordered large slabs of marble from Italy and made tables to support them, as in so many instances his tables do not seem to accord with their tops. In this example the top is of black marble; the somewhat heavy scrolled legs are connected by closely-carved festoons of oak leaves and large acanthus leafage, centring in a woman's mask. This table possesses its original gilding. The next is a smaller table, also in its original gilding, and evidently designed by Kent. The top of red marble is framed in metal, and in this instance the S-scrolled legs are left comparatively simple except for the ordinary acanthus and guilloche ornamentation, the chief feature of this example being the exceedingly graceful pendant of scrolled acanthus inspired by the carving of the end of the seventeenth century. The two very beautiful gilt pedestals standing on either side of this table are carved as terminal figures of boys resting on four small scrolled feet, the heads being





MAHOGANY SIDE TABLE COMMODE

WITH THE CARVING OF THE MAHOGANY, GILT.

Height, 2 ft. 11 in. ; depth, 2 ft. 4 in. ; length, 4 ft. 8 in.

The Property of  
HIS GRACE  
THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE

FURNITURE of the  
17th and 18th Centuries

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surmounted by Ionic capitals. A pair of gilt and mahogany pedestals of almost similar design exist at Houghton, and are also designed by Kent.

There is an elaborate gilt table of picturesque shape, suggesting somewhat the incoming school of Chippendale. The top, evidently of foreign origin, is inlaid with an intricate pattern of cornelians, jaspers and agates on a black marble ground. The birds forming the cabriole legs are spirited in design and in no way resemble the work of Kent, but rather that of one of the many foreigners who were working in this country at that period. Almost all of these tables were carved out of soft wood, and where the original gilding remains it is excellent in quality, though English gilding was not at that time considered equal to French, and it is known that the furniture



THREE CHAIRS IN THE SALON.



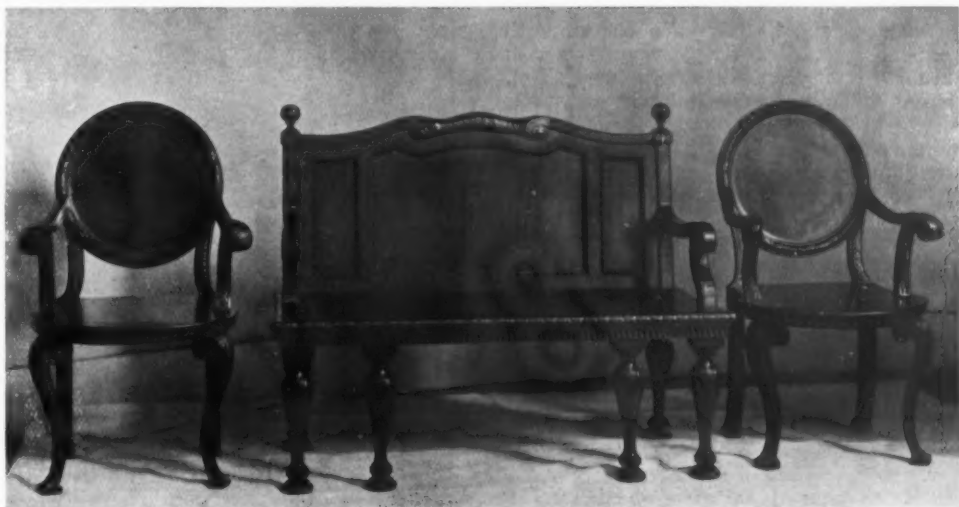
WRITING TABLE WITH ROUNDED ENDS.

made then in England was occasionally sent over to France to be gilded.

Tables, such as the foregoing examples, formed a very important part in the decoration of early Georgian houses. They were placed in every important dining-room and drawing-room, and in the latter were generally surmounted by tall gilt mirrors. Some isolated specimens of this type are to be found of mahogany, but they are few in number, no doubt owing to the cost of that wood before the tax was removed on imported timber by Walpole in 1733. For this same reason all large mahogany furniture of this period is rare. The coloured illustration shows one of a pair of commode side tables of very uncommon character, for the marble top

and the height, two feet eleven inches, prove it could not have been used as a writing-table. The design precedes that of early Chippendale, and is about the date 1728. It is five-sided, two feet four inches deep and four feet eight inches long, and of Cuban wood throughout; the angles are formed by six owl-headed terms finishing in ball and claw feet. These and the whole of the ornament are of mahogany carved and gilt, all very effective, though somewhat coarse in workmanship, the only metal employed being the handles and escutcheons, for it is not till later that we find metal decoration introduced on furniture.

The writing-table shewn is a few years later in date and different in style, the rounded ends presenting a new feature, which was elaborated all through the rest of the century. There is no trace of Kent in the lines of this table, which in construction and detail is far more like what Chippendale was making about 1732 when working in conjunction with his father. The carving of the cornice and mouldings is more delicate than what is found on furniture



MAHOGANY CHAIRS AND SETTEE.

of the previous decade. The table is the same both sides and the isolation of the carved gilt ornament shows great restraint, and it also has a sense of emptiness that is refreshing after the heavy, overcrowded detail employed by preceding designers. This table is two feet seven inches high, four feet six inches long and two feet six inches wide; the wood has never been polished and has faded to a light fawn; the gilding also is original. Fig. 7 represents two from a set of four gilt armchairs and one of a set of three without arms, and all most interesting. In the former examples the arms terminate in lions' heads, the cresting of the backs being of heavily scrolled acanthus. The structure of the lower portion is of X form, an eccentric motive often adopted by Kent, but in this instance not a happy combination with

the arms and back. The centre chair is of unusual proportions, very low in the back, which is but fourteen inches, while the seat is sixteen inches deep, the whole chair standing three feet one inch high. The scrolled caterpillar-like legs do not appear as part of the structure, another eccentricity on the part of this designer. All the chairs have been re-upholstered, but have their original gilding, which is of the highest quality.

In Fig. 8 can be seen examples from a set of six hall seats and ten chairs in fine Cuban mahogany, which were probably made about 1740 to go with the other furniture of the house. They bear the strong imprint of mahogany work of this period, in spite of certain apparent anachronisms; hall seats of this description are rare, being seldom found in bench form before Adam introduced them about 1760. P. MACQUOID.

## LITERATURE.

### A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

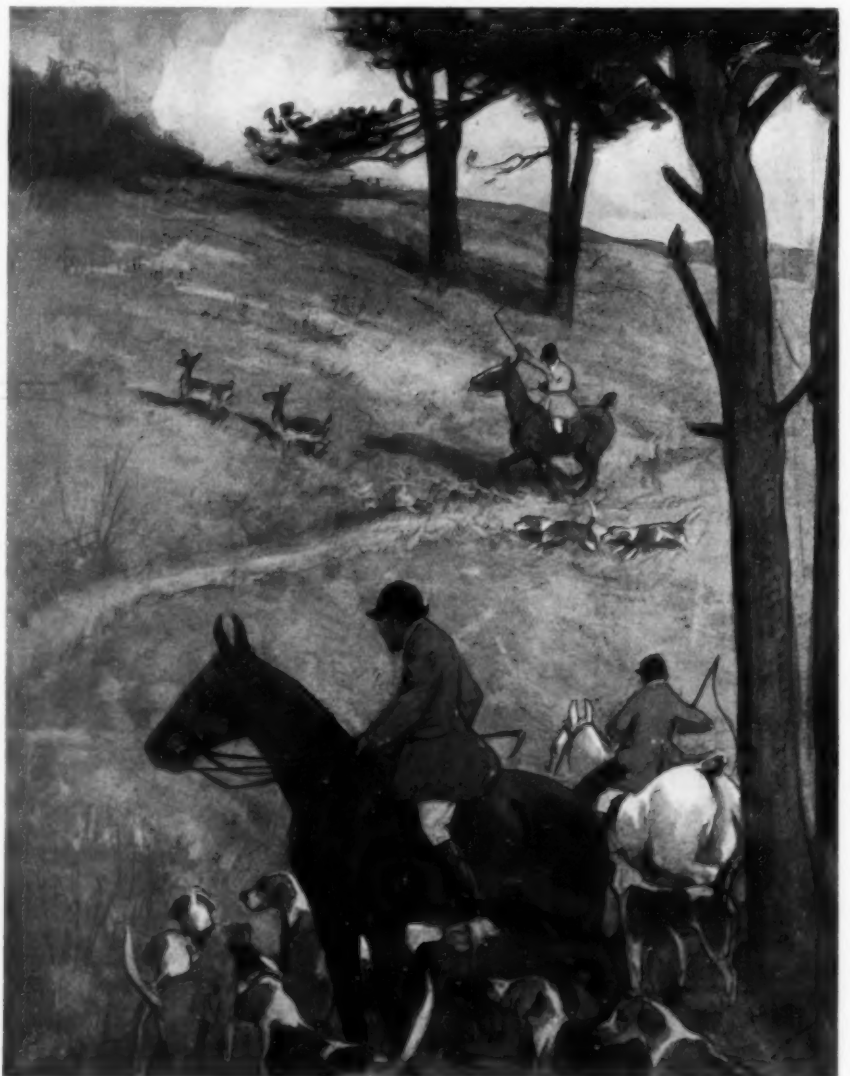
THE art of writing a preface to a reprint is a rare accomplishment, but it is possessed to a high degree by Mr. E. D. Cuming, who performs this duty for Peter Beckford's *Thoughts on Hunting* (Hodder and Stoughton). It may be said at once that the edition, with its very excellent illustrations by Mr. Denholm Armour, is in every way worthy of the reputation attained by that artist; but the new feature is, of course, Mr. Cuming's introduction. Of the author there is not very much to say beyond that he was one of the best sportsmen of his day, and combined a knowledge of hares and hounds with an urbanity and wit that made him the pleasantest of hosts as well as being so capable a Master of Hounds. It was very characteristic of the man that, although *Thoughts on Hunting* was first published anonymously, he subscribed his name to it after a virulent attack by a critic who wrote in the *Monthly Review* of September, 1781. This critic was a humanitarian before his time. He could not have protested with more ignorance against the alleged cruelty of the field had he belonged to one of the humane societies of the present day. Beckford replied soberly and with dignity to these strictures, and it was scarcely worth while to resuscitate them. Much more interesting is it to follow Mr. Cuming's elucidation of the changes that have taken place since Beckford's time. He points out, with not unnatural envy, the great advantages possessed by those who hunted in the eighteenth century, because then railways had not yet been dreamed of, still less wire. Fields, too, were smaller, though not always small enough.

Mr. Cuming thinks, on the other hand, that the country then was poorly stocked with foxes in comparison with modern fashionable countries, and gives several passages in support of his contention, as, for example, when Beckford relates that his own huntsman "sometimes turns down a cat before them which they hunt up to the kill; and when the time of hunting approaches he turns out badgers or young foxes." Throughout the book it is worth noticing that there is no mention of ladies following hounds, although the famous Marchioness of Salisbury was then Master of the Hatfield Harriers (1775-1819). Queen Anne was fond of hunting, as witness Thackeray's inimitable sketch of her coming in red and blown from the pastime, and, as Mr. Cuming points out, Thomson, in "The Seasons," urged the British Fair not to indulge in the fierce sport. In 1803, a sporting writer referred to a "female Nimrod" who was "the best flying leaper of the field." In Beckford's time heavy losses were suffered from distemper among puppies, and at the present time we do not seem to be much better off. This disease is still inexplicable. Hydrophobia was of common occurrence in Beckford's time, but this we have managed to subdue. Kennel lameness and mange were, perhaps, more prevalent then than now.

Mr. Cuming, *à propos* of the danger of leaving hounds behind in covert, and the trick they learn of hunting by themselves,

prints an interesting note from Commander Forbes, author of "Hounds, Gentlemen, Please!":

In my opinion, when it is known that there are hounds away ahead of the main body, the main body should at once be lifted and galloped forward, the huntsman cheering and exciting them as much as possible, and endeavouring to get a nick in and short-cut the leaders, so as to let the latter have as little as possible of that supreme pleasure which destroys so many brilliant hounds, i.e., *getting away by themselves*. This is the point Beckford does not mention; I have seen so many hounds ruined by being allowed to slip away alone that I consider it one of the great dangers to a pack. All good hounds delight in getting forward, the best delight in a lead, and to get away alone often becomes a passion: when a hound is mastered by this passion, he almost invariably becomes mute in order to increase his chance of indulging in it. Such hounds should of course be drafted at once: but the old saying "It is easy to draft from the tail but not from the head" applies here: for the M.F.H. or huntsman is slow to believe that his brilliant hound has become a rogue, and keeps him to make quite sure; he generally keeps him too long and the evil spreads. Highly bred fox-hounds are terribly jealous creatures; they don't like to see a comrade getting a start, and will watch him in covert, find out all his tricks and copy them. I know a pack of which three couple of hounds, I thought last season to be faultless in their work,



"BEFORE YOU HUNT AMONG DEER, LET THEM NOT ONLY SEE DEER, LET THEM DRAW COVERS WHERE DEER ARE."



have been drafted for this cause. One priceless old bitch (priceless, that is to say till last season) did the mischief. She discovered about the end of the cubbing season that there were some very smart young hounds that could go a bit faster than, and had as much drive as herself. She became jealous, and played the tricks I have described. She knew every covert and where to go and time after time, served by her fine nose, slipped away mute; five other hounds copied her manoeuvres and it became imperative to draft all three couple.

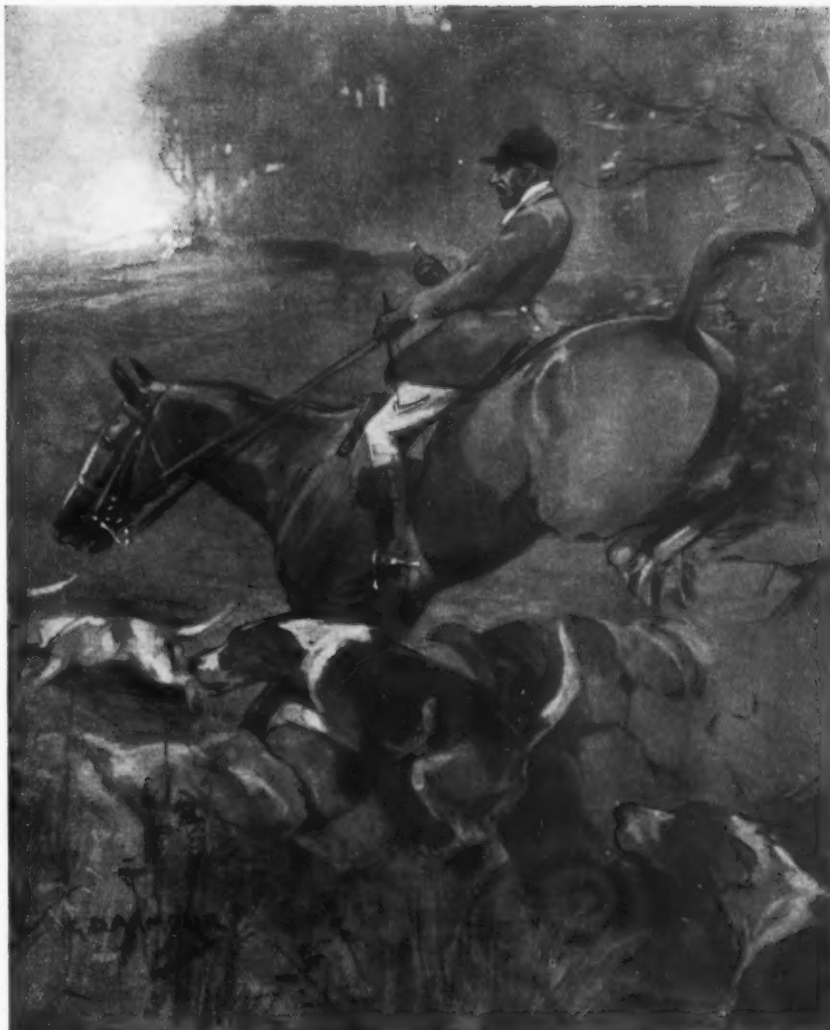
A great deal of interesting information is given about the curious old practices, some of them at least bordering on the superstitious, which were observed in Beckford's time. There was, for instance, the practice of bleeding hounds. It was an age when bleeding was the one remedy of the barber-surgeons for almost every disease in man or beast. Sir Walter Gilbey has left it on record that the Essex farmers used to bleed their animals in the spring. Here is a note upon a passage in Letter VI., where Beckford advocates under certain circumstances the use of the straight horn:

From this it would appear that the straight horn was then coming into use; the new shape could not have gained very general acceptance if we may draw inference from pictures. In Reinagle's *Fox Breaking Cover*, exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1803, the huntsman is blowing hounds out of covert with the old-fashioned curved horn. That instrument gave a more tuneful note than the straight horn, as we learn from Beckford's assurance that it is "not as a musician" he prefers the latter; but it is equally evident that the curved horn emitted a note less carrying or less penetrating than the straight, whence the superiority of the latter for use in large coverts.

#### EARLY MAN.

**Ancient Hunters**, by Professor Sollas. (Macmillan.)

IT is a perilous task for one whose interests are general in character to give an idea of a specialist's book, yet the volume which Professor Sollas has published under the above title must appeal in a way to everybody. It deals with the history of the race, and the author, in addition to precise and accurate scholarship, possesses a width of view and lucidity of style that give his book all the charm of a romance, and this charm is deepened by the melancholy realism of the story. In the very last chapter of the book, that on Chronology, Professor Sollas carries us back from the present moment to the first dim symptoms of man's appearance on the earth. He steps backward with strides which cover a thousand years. A single step, and the whole history of England since the Conquest is passed. Another thousand years backward and we come to the birth of Christ. Before we reach the beginning of the third millennium, the whole history of Rome has been left behind. In the fourth, bronze is introduced into Egypt. In the fifth, there is no bronze, but only copper, and before the beginning of this millennium is reached the time of metals has ended and we are in a stone age. In the middle of the sixth millennium rose the first Egyptian dynasty, and earlier than that King Sargon "was reigning in Mesopotamia, while our Neolithic predecessors in Europe were beginning to found their pile-dwellings in the lakes." When we have gone back for seven thousand years people of a ruder culture appear, "some, like the recent Fuegians, leading a miserable life near the margin of the sea and leaving behind those great shell mounds or kitchen middens which testify to their poverty-stricken existence; a little earlier, perhaps, the Azilian hunters had wandered as far north as the coasts of Scotland." Seven thousand years is a very long period in history as it is known to human beings; but to the geologist it is a very short space indeed. During it man has advanced from the position of being a miserable creature, living at the edge of the sea and eating shell-fish because he had no capacity to hunt anything else, to modern civilisation, when he cleaves the sea in his steamship and the air in his flying-machine, when he has made a servant not only of wind and water, but of the lightning which his progenitors feared so much. Yet in that time physical change on the earth has been very slow. Climate, "so far as we know anything of it, seems to have maintained a general uniformity." Previous to that had occurred the last glacial episode. We shall not follow Professor Sollas into his elucidation of the facts showing the vast changes in climate and even in the distribution of earth and sea, but confine ourselves to the story of human life. This begins with the Pithecanthropus. In summing up the evidence about this creature, Professor Sollas says: "That which distinguishes man from all the beasts of the field is the power and complexity of his mind, and whether the brain be a dream of the mind or the mind a dream of the brain, the two are certainly associated in a manner as close as it is inexplicable." He is cautious about definitely fixing the position of Pithecanthropus, but finds that the forehead is even more receding than that of the chimpanzee. He next takes the power of speech which resides in a particular fold of the brain. "Fortunately, this can be identified in the case just alluded to; its area has been measured, and is said to be twice as great as in the anthropoid apes, but only half as large as in man. Thus in this one respect Pithecanthropus may be truly regarded as a middle term. If further we are justified in arguing from organ to function, then we fairly conclude that this primitive precursor of the human race had already acquired the rudiments of vocal speech." Last and most important is the cranial capacity. The conclusion he draws is that "judged by a character which is generally regarded as of the highest importance, Pithecanthropus must



"NOW, HUNTSMAN, GET ON."

be included within the limits of the human family. In the long ancestral series which extends upwards from the apes to the man he has mounted far more than half-way, and only a few steps of the long ascent remain to separate him from the species *Homo sapiens*, essential man." That he walked upright is evident from his distinctly human femur. This investigation is conducted with the greatest care and interest, but we must omit it in order to go on to see what Professor Sollas can tell us about the Tasmanians, who though a recent race were also a Palaeolithic, or, according to some, an Eolithic race. He describes them as "this isolated people, the most unprogressive in the world, which in the middle of the nineteenth century was still living in the dawn of the Palaeolithic epoch. It is in such races that we can trace the early symptoms of human progress. The Tasmanians had not learned to dress except in winter, when they sometimes wore skins of kangaroos, they adorned themselves with a mixture of grease and ochre to protect themselves from rain." Feminine love of adornment was shown in the way in which the women wore chaplets of flowers or bright berries, fillets of wallaby or kangaroo skin, worn on the wrist or ankle and sometimes under the knee.

They paid great attention to their hair, which was cut a lock at a time with the aid of two stones. They had a pomatum made of fat and ochre. They did not come up to the stage of possessing permanent dwellings, but roamed from place to place in search of food. Their only attempt at making shelter was to put up a rude screen made by fixing strips of bark against wooden stakes, and there is reason to believe that they sometimes sought the shelter of caves. Their weapons were primitive in the extreme. They made a spear out of the shoots of the "ti" tree. They straightened it by bending with both hands while they held on firmly by their teeth. The end was hardened by charring and sharpened by scraping with a notched flake of stone. This spear could be hurled about sixty yards with sufficient force to pierce through the body of a man. Their only other weapon was a club about two feet in length. The women were great climbers. On one occasion it is said a party of lively girls chased by sailors suddenly disappeared until their laughing faces were discerned among the branches of a tree in which the girls had swarmed in the twinkling of an eye. The men hunted kangaroos, wallaby, opossums, bandicoots, the kangaroo rat and the wombat. The animals were roasted in their skins and the ashes of the wood fire sometimes used as a seasoning instead of salt. Eggs of birds were collected by women and children, and snakes, lizards and birds were also eaten. Professor Sollas is seen at his best in his description of the bushmen of South Africa. Until the advent of the white man spoiled his ground, the bushman was pre-eminently a hunter. "The weapon he depended on most, both in the chase and war, was the bow and arrow: the bow usually short and the arrows small, but deadly in their effects, since they were invariably poisoned. Different kinds of poison were used, some stronger, some weaker, according to the size and vitality of the intended victim." He was an ideal sportsman. "In stalking the wary quagga, which feeds in friendly company with the ostrich, the hunter

disguised himself as one of these birds, simulated its gait, stooping every now and again to preen his feathers, or to peck and feed, till he found himself mingling with the herd, and could let fly his poisoned arrows without exciting suspicion. Although under these circumstances he could have made a heavy bag, he never took more than he really wanted, for he was a provident hunter, and killed for food, not for sport. For large game the Bushmen combined together to set traps, digging with great labour carefully concealed pitfalls, or suspending a heavily weighted weapon over the path to the water pools." But perhaps the most interesting feature lay in his love of art. In this respect Professor Sollas compares him to the ancient Mexicans. They engraved animals on the rocks, not by incised lines, but by punching holes. Nor was their dress unsuitable to a people with artistic taste. It was scanty, but not without elegance. The woman's apron was made of thread or strings of beads and sometimes hung down to her feet. The man wore a sort of fur mantle over his shoulder which at night covered him like a blanket when he curled up in his little nest to sleep.

A CHIEF AMONG US.  
**Henrietta Taking Notes**, by E. Crosby Heath. (The Bodley Head.)

HENRIETTA is better than merely amusing. She is attractive as well; and an American child that makes you love her while you laugh at her is as rare in fiction as in life. Her notes on her elders are delightful. She arrives at her conclusions by extremely childlike methods, but their accuracy and wisdom are unquestionable, and she hits off everyone—Loralissa, the dignified "British" help, her two maiden aunts, her brother, her mother's visitors, her own "Schwärmereis"—with the same neatness and sweetness. There is, perhaps, a little too much of it, for a book that renders only one attitude, and one method of perception and description, should not be "too long at a time." But for all that, we look forward to meeting Henrietta again. Henrietta grown up might easily be entrancing.

## AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

1911 AS AN AGRICULTURAL YEAR.

THE glorious summer of the past year, such a one as we seldom experience, will remain in our memories for a long time. Some agriculturists will look back to 1911 as having brought them prosperity, but many will recollect it as a year in which they made little or no profit on the capital they had invested in farming. The class of farmer who suffered most from the prolonged drought and excessive heat of last summer was the one who had a well-stocked holding, especially if it was light soil. The fortunate individuals who benefited by the extraordinary weather and their neighbours' misfortunes were (a) those who farmed land that was not adapted for breeding, raising or fattening livestock; (b) those whose land was suitable for that purpose and yet was not stocked. Many a grazier who thought he knew the exact amount of cattle his grassland would carry, and who bought an average quantity last spring, no matter how clever a judge he might be of the value of store cattle, had the mortification of keeping them until the autumn and then selling them for no more, and in some instances less,



"THO' A HUNTSMAN OUGHT TO BE AS SILENT AS POSSIBLE GOING INTO COVER, HE CANNOT BE TOO NOISY COMING OUT OF IT."

(From "Thoughts on Hunting.")

been grown, and as the quality of the samples was superior to most years, prices advanced. The high price of barley has saved many light-land farmers from severe losses. Like barley, wheat contains but little water this year, and is of exceptional quality, but, proportionately, has not increased in value, and is to-day the cheapest foodstuff on the market. Wheat cannot be given in large quantities to livestock, and farmers have been paying more per stone for pigs' victuals than their best wheat is worth for human consumption.

The almost total failure of the root crop was a severe blow to many agriculturists; not only was the money expended on thousands of acres intended for turnips thrown away, but light land that is not shaded by foliage from the sun's rays scarcely ever grows a good crop the next year. At Michaelmas many stock-owners, owing to the shortage of winter keep, had either to sacrifice most of their sheep and cattle or else make up their minds to keep them through the winter chiefly on straw, chaff and purchased foods, which, as was anticipated, are now selling at exorbitant prices.

After such a pessimistic report it is a pleasure to state that on land not adapted for livestock, such as the fenland in the Eastern Counties, farmers have had a bumper year. Potatoes, mangolds, straw, corn, especially barley, considering the usual low price of fenland barleys, have all yielded well and sold remarkably so. The farmer, too, who most wanted a lucky year has had one. I mean the class of man who is so short of capital that he cannot buy stock for his farm. I do not imply that better crops were grown on badly-farmed holdings than on those in a high state of cultivation; but where no stock was kept, all the clovers and grasses were saved for hay or seed, both of which assets are now of great value, as also are straw, mangolds and other roots which

money than he gave for them. The cow-keeper in many cases sold his milk at a loss, so deep had he to dip into his pocket to pay for artificial foods to help eke out the scanty herbage, and even with this additional and expensive diet his cows' milk yields rapidly decreased from day to day. As the drought continued stock had to be turned into meadows that had been shut up for hay, and those pastures that were spared for that purpose gave but light crops. Brooks, ponds and wells were dried up, and in many instances water for stock had to be carted many miles. Farmers on heavy arable land had, as a rule, abundant wheat crops, but their beans gave a poor return. Light-land farmers were badly hit, but not so hard as they anticipated. Their wheat, as usual, was not injured by the sun; their barleys and oats, where they were drilled early, suffered less from the lack of moisture than was expected; but from late-sown fields the yield of these crops was very small. Maltsters and merchants soon learnt that many less quarters of barley than usual had



survived the drought. Thus, a farmer without stock has been able to cash at high prices practically all his farm produce and has no need to purchase costly feeding-stuffs. This system is not an ideal one, as land from which all produce is sold must soon deteriorate, but this year it has provided many farmers with ready money.

W.

## ON THE GREEN.

BY HORACE HUTCHINSON AND BERNARD DARWIN.

DUNCAN AND BALL V. THE WORLD.

IT may well be that sundry acceptors are clamouring for the privilege of taking up the challenge put forth by Duncan and Tom Ball, but at the moment of writing I have not heard of them. I am told, but whether on good authority or no I cannot say, that the form of the challenge restricts it to a four-ball match, and it may be that the restriction may make some of the old brigade, who have not been brought up to that very modern style of golf, hesitate a little—it is not likely to be more than a little—about acceptance. No doubt it is a style of match that Duncan has been indulging in on his American tour, and it may have won his fancy, but it is not likely that many will defend it as the best test of the game. The best and the most severe of all tests I do not doubt to be the single match. The foursome tests rather different qualities, and of course the test by score differs from both in its test. There are those—and several of the professionals are of the number—who will tell you that the test by score is the most correct and severe of all. Yet if that be so it is a little curious that we never—or hardly ever—hear two men going out for a single and saying “We will not play by holes; we will play by score, because that is a more true test.” If the conclusion, that it is the more true test, were itself true, if the match by holes was not recognised universally as the proper mode of playing the game, and if score play were not a mere device for bringing the play of a large number together for the purpose of comparison, we should surely find matches settled by the score of the round and not by the scores at each hole.

THE CHALLENGE A FORMIDABLE ONE.

In whatever form that match which is likely to arise out of this bold challenge is played, we may be sure that it will take a very good pair to beat the challengers. They are older and harder nuts to crack now than when, a few years back, Duncan and Mayo vainly tried to show that the younger players had “arrived.” What was demonstrated very clearly at that date was that their “arrival” was not yet achieved; but that is not to say that it may not be accomplished now. Of a truth it is rather long overdue. The veterans are very tough and very gallant men, but one may perhaps have a suspicion that the very keenest edge of their game—and cruelly keen and well preserved it has been—is just a little worn. Perhaps neither Vardon, Braid nor Taylor are quite what they were ten years or so ago. But it is not necessary to call on the veterans at all to find very worthy acceptors. Ray did great things all through last year and fears no foe. Why should he? But the match that would carry most interest would, no doubt, be one that would yet again pit the younger against the older school and show whether the former have even yet “got there.”

H. G. H.

ABERDOVEY YET AGAIN.

Those who know Aberdovey will be interested to learn a piece of news which may to the uninitiated appear purely domestic. We have at last succeeded in playing the new holes among the sandhills, and that in winter, and a very wet winter too. The sandhills at Aberdovey have not been quite kindly placed by Nature; they are not dotted here and there, but stand in one long and imposing range. Hitherto in winter water always lay at the foot of the hills towards the far end of the course, and all the king's horses and all the king's men could not get it off again till the summer came round once more. Now, at last, we have got a new and magnificent drain which has taken the water away, and so we are playing some fine narrow holes between sandhills on the one side and rushes on the other instead of some that were, to say the truth, rather dull, flat and featureless. There is, too, another one-shot hole—quite a good one—and we wanted another of these now fashionable holes rather badly. These holes are yet rather in the rough, and the greens tempt the more impetuous to imprecations; but still they are good, natural and difficult holes and, which is a great thing, they look like good holes. Incidentally, when the crowded summer months come round again, the danger to life and limb will be sensibly diminished, for of old the outgoing and incoming courses came perilously near together, and there were certain holes where

it was the part of a prudent man to hide behind a kopje and pray to be saved.

THE DIFFICULTY OF KEEPING THE EYES OPEN.

I have said, perhaps rather too enthusiastically, that the ground is dry. It would have been more accurate to say that it is out of water, for, in fact, the persistent rains and the high hills beside the course, that drain down on to it, have made the turf rather sodden. This has, in my personal experience, a most disturbing effect on the shorter iron shots. I find that my eyes try resolutely to shut long before my mashie gets to the ball, and this effect on the flight of the ball is not good. This proceeds doubtless from a fear of receiving a piece of mud in the eye; it is a wholly contemptible fear, but it is one intensely difficult to overcome. Anyone who has ever tried to play a shot out of water knows this horrible tendency to shut the eyes, and turf that is saturated with wet produces much the same result. To take much turf is fatal, and so one ignominiously tops or half-tops the mashie shots. This ought to please those who, thinking that to cut the turf is a wicked action, long for the return of the ancient bally. Yet, as a fact, the bally can remove a divot second to none, and Mr. W. E. Fairlie, who is the chief and most skilful exponent of that club, can take turf with any man.

A BOGEY EXTRAORDINARY.

A pleasant story comes to me from a Cornish golf course. It is related by a friend of the most honourable character on the authority of not fewer than three members of the club committee. A visitor entered for a Bogey competition with another visitor to mark for him, but when his card was duly sent in neither secretary nor committee could make head or tail of it. They therefore cross-examined the player as to what it meant. “What is your handicap?” they asked, to which he replied that he had none, and therefore played Bogey level. The card examined by this light proved as obscure as ever, so they asked for still further illumination. “Why, it's quite simple,” said the stranger. “You see it puts down one for the first hole. That is four hundred yards long, so I lost that. Then there's a two for the second and a three for the third; I lost both of them too. In fact, it was not till the thirteenth that I managed to win a hole. I did that one in twelve.” It is, I think, an agreeable story, but in spite of my honourable friend and the three committee-men I am not quite sure I believe it.

B. D.

## THE ROYAL NAVY V. THE HARLEQUINS.

THIS interesting match was played at Queen's Club on Saturday, with the curious result that the Navy, which appeared to play the better game throughout, was only able to draw at the last moment, the score being ten points each. If the Navy had a weakness, it lay in their rather wild passing. The strength of their playing lay in their tackling and, generally speaking, in their defensive tactics. The Harlequins, in the first part of the game, succeeded in scoring a try; but in the latter part they were thrown on the defence and, with a heavier team against them, needed all their pluck to avoid defeat. At the beginning the Navy soon began to press and, except for the mistakes that were much too frequent, they with their better followers might have forced the game. It would be more true to say they were in the way of losing than that the Harlequins were winning. In the second half, the Navy had to do all they knew in order to avoid defeat.



LIEUTENANT G. H. D'O. LYON, R.N., AND J. G. G. BIRKETT.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### A GREAT EXPERIMENT WITH SHEEP.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I agree with every word the article, "A Great Experiment with Sheep," contains as to the position of the British sheep-breeding industry in face of the present foreign competition, and also that our future trade depends upon producing mutton of the highest quality which will maintain a price of its own, while growers of second quality mutton cannot possibly compete against the foreign importers. The results of the experiments made are highly interesting and instructive, and should be of great value to sheep-breeders. I hope that other breeders will study these results and make similar experiments, as the factors of soil and climate are of considerable importance in sheep-breeding, and are necessarily left out of account where an experiment is confined to one district. I am glad to see that the Suffolk-Southdown cross was so successful, and shall certainly be inclined to try it myself on a farm where I have hitherto bred the Lincoln and Suffolk cross.—E. PRETYMAN.

### HEIRLOOMS AND DEATH DUTIES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I consider the thesis in the leading article of your Christmas Number that "Death Duties are responsible for the dispersion of heirlooms" requires some qualification. First, I find from the sixty-third section of the Finance Act of 1910 that objects of national, scientific, historic or artistic interest are exempt from the operation of Death Duties; and, secondly, it seems to me that the enormous appreciation in the value of works of art is the real cause of their being used as a means of satisfying the tax-gatherer, or for providing money for other exigencies. The existence of works of art as such has not produced Death Duties, which, all things being equal, would have come as a means of taxation in any case. If I am right, no one who has an interest in his ancestors, or is of an artistic temperament, and for either of these reasons wishes to retain his treasures, need be under much greater disability in their possession than was the ancestor himself of whom the picture, let us say, was originally painted, for in the ancestor's day the Sir Joshua or Hoppner was of comparatively small value, and only interesting to the owner and his friends; to-day, provided the possessor does not wish to turn his work of art into cash, the position seems to be much the same. Should, however, the owner disregard any sentimental or artistic association and wish to take advantage of the great monetary appreciation, he must share in the burden which is being placed upon all owners of wealth. I do not suppose for one moment that the existing Government would exempt an actual estate from the operation of the Death Duties, as I understand many Members of Parliament wish to cause land to be dispersed. I take it, however, that such places as Haddon Hall, or any well-known "view," might escape as being an object of national or historic interest, which qualifications, as above mentioned, are used in the Finance Act referred to. Any restriction as to works of art leaving the country is absurd.—ANTIQUARIAN.

### ITALIAN GARDEN POTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Red pots, like those from Florence, are made by S. and E. Collier, Limited, Grovelands, Reading.—A. L. JARVIS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In answer to your correspondent "D" he can get very good Italian pots from J. P. White of Bedford. The Italian pots this firm has supplied me are excellent.—HENRY CALKIN.

### SQUIRREL SWIMMING A RIVER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was interested in reading a letter under the above heading in your issue of November 18th, as, with the exception of a similar incident which I witnessed some years ago, I never knew of anyone else seeing a squirrel in the water. The occasion to which I refer took place while I was sculling down the Gloucester and Sharpness Ship Canal. Noticing something swimming across the canal, I endeavoured to intercept it; but the animal dived under the boat and reached the opposite bank. The tail in this case was trailing straight out behind, which gave it somewhat the appearance of a rat in the water. Immediately on reaching the bank it took refuge in a solitary willow tree, when I saw what it actually was. It is so long ago that I cannot give the width of the canal at this point, and, of course, there was practically no stream. One curious point about it was that the side from which the squirrel started was meadow-land purely; there were no trees or hedges for a considerable distance.—J. R. MACDONALD, Johannesburg.

### HEATHER-BURNING IN WINTER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Although heather-burning during the months of March and April is of common occurrence, it is not so well known that on some moors strips of heather are burned on every suitable occasion—even in the heart of winter. It is, of course, only in favoured localities that this winter burning can be prosecuted, for the ground must lie comparatively low, that is, below the line of perpetual winter snow, and must also be dry, for the rays of the feeble winter sun are not sufficiently powerful to penetrate far into the heather. The accompanying photograph was obtained early in January on a moor where heather-burning, even at that early season, was of almost everyday occurrence. In this particular locality, where the ground is very sheltered and low-lying, early burning is of great importance, for here the grouse nest early, and late fires would tend to disturb the birds, even although it did no actual harm to the nests. On the occasion on which the photograph was secured there was, if anything, too strong a wind for the best results to be obtained from the burning. In a wind the fire is apt to run over the moor without burning the hard stalks of the heather plants, and when these remain standing they act as a formidable barrier to the young grouse chicks, impeding their progress as they follow their parents to the nearest water. Autumn heather-burning seems to have increased during recent years. We noted a considerable fire as early as August, though whether it was accidental or not is a matter of doubt. Towards the end of September stretches of higher

moor are not infrequently burned, and this burning extends until the time when the winter snows cover the hills. The great advantage of this autumn burning is that it allows of stretches of heather being cleared which are almost invariably covered in snow until after the end of the spring burning season.—SETON GORDON.

### CHRISTMAS WILD FLOWERS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—At Christmas, 1910, I sent you a list of fourteen plants which were found in bloom during a botanical ramble in the vicinity of Ongar on December 27th. While on a similar ramble with some friends in the same locality on

December 26th last, curiously enough we found even a larger number of plants still in bloom. Those of your readers who are botanists will, no doubt, be interested to know the names of these plants, which are as follows: Gorse, groundsel, common chickweed, mouse-ear chickweed, common speedwell, scentless mayweed, knotgrass, field speedwell, common avens, yarrow, dandelion, red and white dead-nettles, shepherd's purse, creeping buttercup, daisy, broad-leaved dock, dwarf and petty spurges, thyme-leaved sandwort, burnet saxifrage and common sow-thistle. We also found five or six plants of the spurge laurel just near Blackmore, but none of these showed any signs of bloom.—W. RICHTER ROBERTS.

### OUTDOOR FLOWERS IN MID-WINTER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—May I be allowed to add a few names to the very scanty list of outdoor mid-winter flowers furnished by your contributor "H." in last week's COUNTRY LIFE. This is a subject which deserves more than the passing attention it is too frequently accorded. People accept the "scarred brown bare earth and leafless trees" as if our English climate forced us to live without beauty of bloom or foliage for four weary months. I mention foliage particularly, as a most attractive winter garden might be arranged by making free use of the greys of lavender, santolina, pinks and the bright greens of Veronica Traversa, mossy saxifrages, Choisya ternata and many other plants. If people would only experiment with a small plot of ground grown entirely for winter effect they would speedily realise that there are other joys connected with the garden besides the first blaze of the daffodils or the midsummer glory of the roses. Such notes in one's garden diary as the following tell of moments of real pleasure: December 8th, first Iris alata; December 18th, first winter aconite; January 4th, first Crocus Imperati; January 13th, picked handful of wallflowers, Cyclamen Coum, one Iris histrio, Crocus vitellinus, Lenten hellebore, daisies, red and pink. Nearly every writer of notes on this subject is content to mention Christmas Roses, winter jasmine and probably Iris stylosa. The latter is, indeed, a gem, though hardly correctly described as "a little blue and golden iris." This would apply more to I. histrioides. Iris stylosa, with its delicate lavender blooms, expanding to a width of five inches on stalks six or seven inches long, is an anomaly in the dark days of December. Lucky those who can grow it well! I cannot agree with "H.'s" remarks about odd blooms of wallflower on old plants. For the last twelve years I have grown Barr's Extra Early Parisian Wallflower, which never fails to flower in mild weather all through the winter. Sown in May or early June, it commences to bloom in August or September; must be then pinched back and planted in poor soil in a sunny, sheltered corner.



WINTER HEATHER BURNING.



Severe frost will injure it, but it is seldom killed outright, and will still continue to bloom into April and May. I know no flower less susceptible to the bitterest cold than *Crocus Imperati*. It will not, indeed, open and disclose its delicate mauve inner petals, but the buds stand up bravely, and can be picked and carried into the house, there to expand their full beauty. I have over fifty blooms at present (January 1st), and am always puzzled that this precious little gem is not better known. It succeeds *Crocus longiflorus*, and is followed by *C. susianus*. The early days of February are perhaps hardly mid-winter, but to many people still a time of bareness. Then it is we look for *Narcissus minimus* or *Iris reticulata* or the first blue tips of *Muscari azureum*. There is always a great element of chance about winter gardening, and every season differs. This year *Choisya ternata* has bloomed wonderfully, but *Laurustinus* is very late; there are many wild violets but no common primroses, winter aconite is a week later than last year and the hardy chrysanthemums continued ten days longer.—B. M. B.

[We welcome the above interesting letter, as it proves that in mild winters such as the present the outdoor garden is by no means devoid of interest. The article referred to by our correspondent was not intended to deal exhaustively with winter effects obtainable by the use of foliage plants, but rather to draw attention to some well-known flowers that might be found in any well-ordered garden at mid-winter. The flowers sent by our correspondent were Snowdrops, Winter Jasmine, Chrysanthemums in several varieties, Wallflowers, *Choisya ternata* in bud, Lenten Rose or Hellebore, *Crocus Imperati* and a beautiful variety of *Iris stylosa*.—Ed.]

"THE YEW IN THE CRAG."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I think the enclosed picture of a notable tree on the estate of Captain Myles Birket at Winstar, Lancashire, may interest your readers. Of late years the great age formerly attributed to big yews has been doubted, but in this case title deeds of three hundred and fifty years back mention this tree, which side by side with an ash grows out of a cleft in a great boulder.—C. G.

HERONS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will any of your correspondents give a bad word for herons? They eat my trout—carefully well-bred *Levenensis*, value one shilling each—in their second year. A heron of fair appetite will take fifteen shillings' worth in a night, or in the grey of the morning, without a thank you. And perhaps your correspondents can tell me how they know when to come—when the keeper is in bed, and you have not your gun; also how to trap them or frighten them effectively. I am told they are handsome, interesting birds. But no one so far has said they are musical. Indeed, their villainous "scraik" at night is deemed by some of us up North to forebode evil. I send you a drawing of a trout I received yesterday; it came out of a heron's throat, which my keeper fortunately slew a

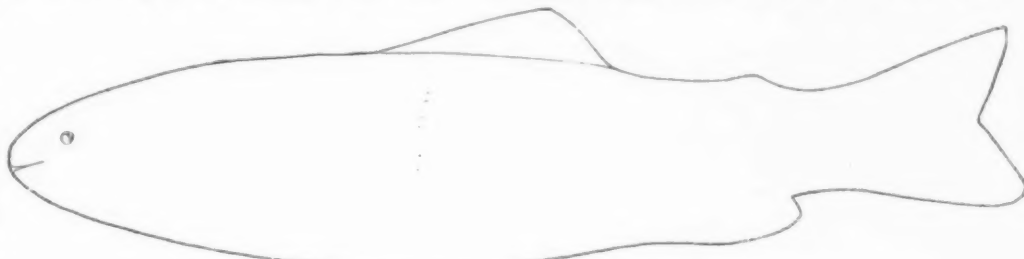


A YEW 350 YEARS OLD.

few days ago. There are lots of them on the Tweed, at Ashiestal, for example, fishing out of season, too, and no one objects to them; and yet everyone objects to an empty creel. Rather inconsistent, is it not? Bad luck to them.—W. G. B. M.

[The following is an extract from the letter of our correspondent's keeper: "I shot two herons here on Friday night near the old plantation, where we have put up a new fence. One had six perch in it, the other had this trout. I am

sending the drawing of it to you so that you will see what size they can take."—Ed.]



TWELVE INCHES LONG, ONE POUND IN WEIGHT.

CROOKED-BREASTED TURKEYS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I write to ask if you can explain the cause of turkeys going crooked-breasted. We

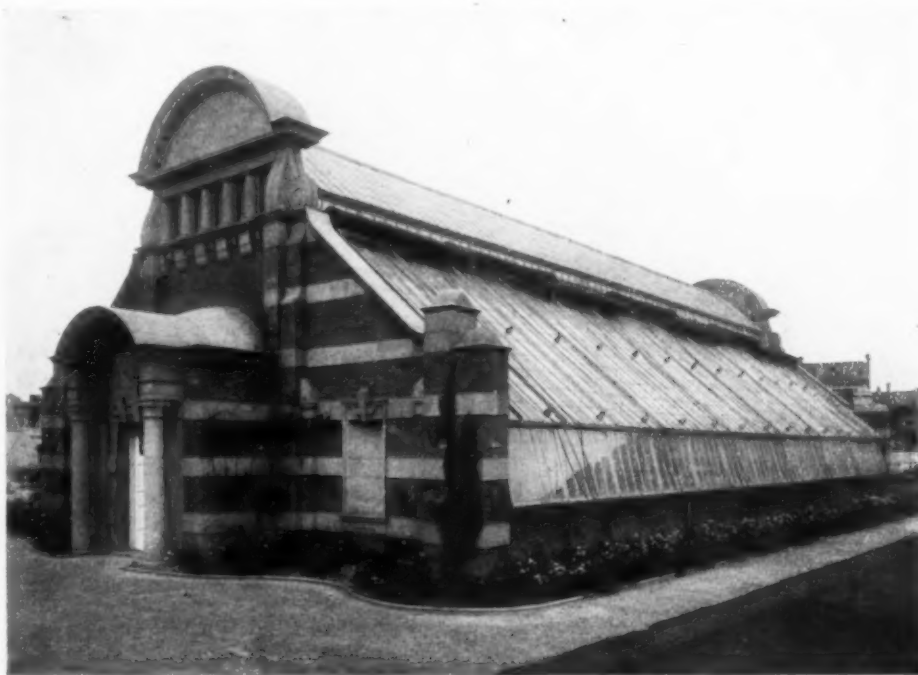
have gone in for turkeys for several years, but never had them go so before. We killed sixty in Christmas week, and twenty of them were useless for sale, although they weighed eighteen to twenty pounds. The breast-bone spoilt them. I shall be very pleased if you can explain the reason of this defect.—E. H.

[“Breeding from parent birds with crooked breasts is the most likely cause of crooked breast in young turkeys, and it is of the greatest importance when choosing turkeys for stock to select only those having a perfectly straight breastbone. In your case the fact that after several years the deformity has developed points to inbreeding, or the use of stock birds that have accidentally, by the use of bad perches when poults, developed it. A turkey with a crooked breast-bone is just as good eating as one with a straight bone, but the market condemns the former, and rightly. Your best plan is to look over your stock birds, or, rather, handle them, and see if they are to blame, and if so replace them with straight-breasted turkeys, and to provide broad perches for the poults.” So writes a practical poultry-keeper. A scientific ornithologist replies as follows: “The twisting of the keel of the breast-bone to which our correspondent refers is caused by the pressure of the body on the perch when roosting, and is especially liable to occur in the case of heavy birds which are forced to roost on narrow perches. A possible contributory cause is a deficiency in earthy matter—calcium phosphate—in the bones; and this suggests some error in diet. It would be well to look into this, and to provide thicker perches.”—Ed.]

PEACE PROGRESS IN CHINA.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have the honour to forward to you by this mail a photograph of a conservatory erected in one of our public parks this year, showing that despite war, which is at present devastating this country, the arts of peace also progress.—D. MACGREGOR, Superintendent, Shanghai Municipal Council Parks, China, December 6th, 1911.



FOR THE CHINESE PUBLIC.



THE ROUND HOUSE AT ALTON.

though I do not know that they will be of sufficient interest for your paper; but I send them on the chance. Tomatoes always grow very well in this part of the world, as the summers are very hot; but last summer I had an extraordinary harvest of these—nearly one hundred and forty pounds—from only a few rows in a small garden worked by myself. Where I took the photographs the soil is very poor; but the walls behind them reflecting the heat, it seems to agree with the tomatoes all the same.—MARY KLENCK, Gmunden, Upper Austria.

[We are sorry that the photographs are not suitable for reproduction.—Ed.]

## GUILDFORD'S OLD-WORLD COTTAGES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Mr. Thackeray Turner's letter in COUNTRY LIFE on December 9th with reference to the proposal to demolish a number of old-world cottages in Guildford for the benefit of street improvements, has had the effect of arousing widespread interest, and since then very strong efforts have been made from almost all quarters to induce the local Council to stay the hand which is to sweep this picturesque bit of old England into oblivion. The article and photographs in COUNTRY LIFE have been brought before the local authority officially, and a copy of this journal was handed round the council chamber at the meeting on Friday, when the question came up for further consideration. It transpired at that meeting that the local authority are not themselves masters of the situation, the improvement was not regarded as a pressing one, and one member suggested that there was not a majority of the members in favour of the scheme. The situation, however, is complicated by an undertaking which was given to the Surrey County Council a few years ago, when the county authority made a substantial contribution towards the widening of the street in question, which had the effect of creating "a neck of the bottle" thoroughfare, and it is on this narrow part of the road—the Farnham Road—that the cottages abut. The undertaking given by the local Council was to widen this part in a certain number of years. The work has been delayed from time to time, but the situation has now to be faced, and matters have been precipitated by the fact that the authority have already begun to acquire the property which has to be disturbed. The whole thing, therefore, rests entirely with the Surrey County Council. If that body will release the Corporation from its undertaking, it is felt that that will be the end of the matter and the cottages will be saved. If they will not, the work must proceed, and the property will very soon be a thing of the past. The protests received have been from most representative sources, including the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty, and in appealing to the Council to stay their hand, Mr. Hamer, the secretary, wrote: "We are losing so much of the charm of ancient England that we feel

## THE ROUND HOUSE.

TO THE EDITOR.  
SIR,—This ancient structure stands in the village of Alton, Staffs, and is now used as a butcher's shop. In former days the Earls of Shrewsbury confined herein prisoners after conviction at their court. The last prisoner incarcerated contracted rheumatic fever and died about sixty years ago.—B. W. T.

## A CORNER OF TOMATOES.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I am enclosing two photographs of a "corner of tomatoes" in my little garden,

sure you will understand our protest, and our real wish to see Guildford on the side of the preservers rather than on the side of the destroyers of beautiful and unique domestic architecture." The Council have been advised to acquire a number of modern commercial premises, which have "no particular beauty or interest," on the other side of the road, to enable the improvement to be made; but it is stated that the cost of widening on that side would be four or five times that of the proposed plan. It is pointed out that the County Council is now the body to which the appeal should be made, and it is expected that at the quarterly meeting of that authority this month a strong fight will be made to save to Guildford these much-cherished cottages.—W. A. S.

R.P.U. 1906; 1442.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—On December 15th a pigeon was picked up at Hanwell, Berkshire, wearing a ring with the following inscription—R.P.U. 1906; 1442. The man who gave me the ring could not say whether the bird was a wild or tame pigeon, but it had apparently died a natural death. I should be glad if any of your readers could tell me where the bird was ringed.—O. M.

## THE DESTRUCTION OF LARKS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Since many reason to fit their acts, rather than act to fit their reasoning, some will find a motive for humanity where others find an excuse for the lack of it. "Land Agent" apparently considers man in his right to monopolise the world, and the increase of the earth, to the uttermost farthing's-worth, and has no consideration for Nature's masterpieces, or the pleasure they give to hundreds who have not a mean and mercenary spirit, but live and let live.—T. L. HAWKINS.

## A WAYSIDE TRAGEDY.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The thrush shown in the photograph seems to have been making its way through a hedge and become entangled in a long horsehair, the end of which was firmly caught in the brambles. The poor bird's struggles only tightened the hair, and eventually it died of strangulation.—SEYMOUR MURRAY, Torquay.

## DENE PLACE.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—Mr. Bonner's discovery of an old bow window, supported on pillars, which is similar to that designed by me for Dene Place, is interesting. I think that the type must be fairly common. In Stratford village, about seven miles from Dene Place, there is a good specimen of the kind, which has lately been much injured. I have also seen a design of Mr. Ernest Newton's in which the feature occurs. For the faults that Mr. Bonner finds in my design he must blame me and not the Regency style, of which Dene Place is hardly a typical example. I am inclined to agree with him that the front door is not in the best of proportion to the rest of the façade, though I cannot see that the casement windows are out of scale with the gable window, the size of the panes in both being identical. It is fruitless, however, to discuss these matters. My only reason for answering Mr. Bonner's objections is that I do not wish any blame incurred by



A TRAGEDY IN NATURE.

me to fall upon a manner of design in which I put my trust, and which has many abler exponents.—H. S. GOODHART-RENDEL.

## A PRIZE LITTER.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I am enclosing a snap-shot of my prize litter of West Highland white terriers in case you might like to make use of it in your paper. They are by Champion Chawston Garry out of Frimley Sparklet, and were born on July 15th. They took first prize and silver cup at the Surrey County Show in an open class.—M. BASSET.



WHITE LITTLE HIGHLANDERS.